

PRESS CONFERENCES
of
THE PRESIDENT

1941 -- July 1 to Dec. 31

J. Romagna (PC's 752 to 795)
Official Reporter

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #752,
Held in the President's Study at Hyde Park, N. Y.,
July 1, 1941 -- 11.15 A.M., E.D.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's a grand day. (as the newspapermen file in)

Why the hell did you want to come up today? (jokingly) This is the
day to wear asbestos. (laughter)

Q They tell us the first one at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library was
a Republican. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got a blessed thing. I won't say a word. You
can ask all the questions, and I will say "No" or "Don't know".

Q Have you decided yet, Mr. President, whether you will be in Washington
on the Fourth of July?

Q I would like to go back to cool Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (he laughs) I am going to stay here as
long as I can. I haven't ordered the train.

Q Well, off the record, what would be your hunch on that? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't even got an off-the-record hunch. I would like
to stay here, but I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is safe to assume that the Friday broad-
cast will be either from here or Washington.

Q Thank you. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You don't mind staying up here, do you?

Q I would like to go back to cool Washington. It's cool down there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. As long as we do have it here -- just thinking about
the movie people. Er -- somebody suggested that we have it in my
room over at the Library. It has never been done.

Q Nice place.

THE PRESIDENT: What do you think?

Q We can do it all right.

THE PRESIDENT: All right for the movie people?

Q Sure.

THE PRESIDENT: They might think it was a little small. I think it is big enough. You can tell them -- if they are here -- that we will do it four o'clock Friday afternoon. Of course, they want pictures of it, apparently.

Q Mr. President, I see in the papers that Secretary Knox is urging the use of the Navy immediately, to clear the Atlantic for deliveries of supplies to Britain. Does that meet with your approval?

THE PRESIDENT: Mm -- mm -- I don't think there is any comment.

Q Mr. President, have you been kept informed of the arrest of these spies in New York City?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what I read in the papers.

Q I wonder if that has been linked with the Van Norden sight. Can you say if that is similar?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know any more than you do. Probably less. Too hot. (he laughs)

MR. DURNO: Do you care to comment, sir, on the report of the House Military Affairs Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. Anything specific?

MR. DURNO: Well, it criticised the Administration's handling of the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Where?

MR. DURNO: On the defense program.

THE PRESIDENT: Where? In what particular? (George Durno hesitates)
(laughter)

MR. DURNO: It suggested the appointment of a single head ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) For what?

MR. DURNO: For the running of the defense program.

THE PRESIDENT: In what particular? I mean in what running of the defense program?

Q The Knudsen-Hillman production, I think the story said.

THE PRESIDENT: Why?

Q Production for defense.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, George just had a bad time. As a matter of fact I will talk to you off the record. It has got to be off the record, but it is worth-while to assemble a few thoughts when you get back a little.

I didn't read all the story, that is perfectly true, but I got an idea about what it is about, and all the clamor in it, in order to see whether they had taken up any one specific thing, and based any recommendation on any one specific thing, and I couldn't find it. Not one single article or item. Now, what-- what worth is a report of that kind? There wasn't one single item that I could find in that report. Now, of course, probably the whole report was not printed -- I will probably get somebody to look it up and check -- but I don't think you will find one item.

Q I believe they suggested that the automobile industry had been permitted to take steel and other materials over too long a period.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, after all -- this is still off the record -- hindsight is awfully valuable, and it is true that a year ago there were two things that happened that have been changed by subsequent events. The first one -- the program -- that is to say, appropriations by

the Congress to call for the making of such and such material; and the second was that we got the best available men we could find to give us a checkup. They said there was plenty of steel to go around, and therefore there was no curtailment of the civilian use of steel. That's a year ago.

Well, there were two things that happened, and after all, if you had -- oh, what? -- Eli the Prophet in charge -- or Julius Caesar, or somebody else -- the sole person in charge of things -- what would he do? He would get the best advice he could, based on those two factors, what Congress had appropriated for -- what the military people thought was necessary at that time. And this is the same thing, of course -- Congress and the military people went along pretty well.

Then came the report from the best brains that could be bought. (he laughs) And at that time it looked as if it was in pretty good shape. Then two things happened: a number of people got worried; they asked for a checkup in the course of this past spring, and there was a checkup. And the checkup showed that the original estimate was too low, in view of the fact that the Congress and the Military had asked for more stuff, so they said, "You are perfectly all right, but it may mean the curtailment of some civilian use".

Well, that was begun. There may be more of it. I don't know -- I don't know today what the program is going to be three months from now. It will depend on the international situation. Maybe some individual's guess was wrong. You remember the first guess of Stettinius was wrong, for example. He got the best brains that he could find, and this last guess may be all right and it may not --

it depends on the future and not on the past.

We may have to curtail automobile production some more. We are getting enough steel at the present time. We may not get enough six months hence, which means less for civilian automobiles. Now that is the one example that you find, and if there is anything else, you will find the same general rule applies. But for the program at any one given time, we are getting along all right.

Now, nobody can guess the future. And if you remember a year ago, I said we have all got to guard against two things. That is the tendency to -- the tendency to say six months after an appropriation bill or an Order has gone through, "Why haven't we got it?" "Why didn't they go around -- my old Garfinckel story -- to Garfinckel's and buy it?" Of course you can't. You have got to build a factory first.

And then the other thing is, they fail to realize that the needs of a year ago are very different from the needs of today. I haven't got the faintest idea -- none of us have -- what the needs of next October are going to be. We can't guess. We are making -- it might be called -- the best guess that we can. It may be entirely changed three months from now.

In other words, this report, as I read it, it doesn't amount to a 'hill of beans' because there is no specification. We have known for a year in automobiles we might have to curtail civilian use more and more. We have got plenty of leeway, as you remember, on all steel production. 25% was for defense needs; 75% for civilian needs. It won't hurt terribly if we reduce civilian use from 75% to 60%.

Q As it looks now, sir, everybody who is going to buy a car is buying a car.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Just informally, Mr. President, can you tell us, off the record, anything about the conduct of the Russian-German war? Their military communiques are so patently a tissue of lies.

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody knows.

Q Nobody knows?

Q Are you getting any reports you consider reliable?

THE PRESIDENT: No. In other words, we are getting exactly the same communiques from Moscow and Berlin that you are getting.

Q The Army -- the middle of last week -- said that they had surveyed the forces on the Russian-German front. The Germans had 6,000 planes and the Russians 4,000, and Germany claims to date to have knocked 4167 out of the air. (laughter) It looks confusing.

THE PRESIDENT: Very true; and same thing with tanks. Exactly the same thing with tanks.

Q On the record, Mr. President, anything you care to say about the apparent election of Lyndon Johnson?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Anything you care to say about the apparent election of Lyndon Johnson?

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any more news this morning?

Q Except what appears in the paper.

Q It appears pretty uncertain.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I would say it was not completely certain, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better go to Washington. This is -- has

to be off the record. I just got an intimation last night that Lyndon Johnson's friends were all 'het up' because the -- there is such a thing, you know, -- this is off the record -- of withholding returns. I don't of course say what the motive is, but Texas law has been withholding the returns.

Q Eighteen to twenty thousand of the votes still out, apparently.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think that steps are being taken to police it.

Is that a polite word? You had better find out from Washington, but the intimation last night is that they were going to police the thing.

Q State police?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q State police, I believe. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You know, one other funny thing happened -- this is all off the record. Up here in this State we have had voting machines for a long, long time, and they were apparently perfectly safe. We didn't think there were any phony returns from voting machines, as far as I know, except that they -- as they spread around the State, there were some awfully queer returns that came in, and of course the voting machines are all made by one company. It is a perfect cinch for them. It is the most complete monopoly there is in the world -- the voting machine.

So they devised a brand new one -- which of course would have put an awful lot of money into their pocket -- a photographic plate on the back of the machine. Well, as you know, on a voting machine, when you want to read the darn thing, you have to take a screwdriver and unscrew the back before you can get to the figures on it. Now

this thing is a photographic plate on the inside of the back, and before they can unscrew it, they have to expose that plate and take a reading of the figures before -- photographic reading -- before they can take the back off. Then they have to have that plate developed and send it in to the County Board, or State Board, or something like that. It looks almost foolproof.

Q It seems to be.

THE PRESIDENT: Charge an extra \$150.00 to get one of those plates on the back of the machine. It's a cinch.

Q Can it be put on the present machines?

THE PRESIDENT: You probably have to get a new machine.

MR. JOHN HENRY: Speaking of polls, Mr. President, your Congressman, Mr. Fish, is conducting a poll now, on whether his constituents agree that the United States should enter the war or not. Have you received ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I didn't get one. I didn't get one. My wife got one, and I think she voted that she also was against sin.

MR. JOHN HENRY: Is that your answer?

THE PRESIDENT: (the President laughs) You remember President Coolidge's story on him. His wife came back from church -- he hadn't gone, he had a cold. No -- his wife didn't go to church. He went to the church. And he came back. She said, "Did you have a good sermon?" "What did he preach about?" "Sin," said Coolidge. "What did he say about it?" "He was against it." (laughter)

That's very much like this poll which Fish is conducting. Why, anybody would vote, of course -- obviously -- one way on that thing. "Are you against war?" Sure -- we are all against war.

[Joseph m.]

Q Captain Robert Patterson seems to be happy.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q This estimate of the poll of the New York Daily News is a summary ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The same question.

Q I don't know exactly how it is worded but generally it is the same.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. Well, of course, all of those -- that -- that type of policy -- it is -- it is just like saying, "Are you against sin?" I shouldn't be surprised -- if somebody gave me the Daily News poll -- if I wouldn't vote just the same way as Captain Patterson would vote.

Q Mr. President, back when war first started, it was a popular question to ask you if you thought we could keep out of it.

THE PRESIDENT: There may have been.

Q You always then -- said then you thought we could.

THE PRESIDENT: No, I didn't. I said I hoped so. Yes. (he laughs)

Q Is that still your answer?

THE PRESIDENT: Doing it since what? -- first of September, 1939 -- same old answer. (he laughs)

Q Thank you, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe there's a blessed thing. I am just sitting around taking a swim each afternoon.

Q We will take a swim, but we don't have to go in a pool.

THE PRESIDENT: Anybody played golf, or has it been too hot for that?

Q Yes, we have been playing nearly every day. Good water over there.

Good wells. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I hope you have stopped sampling that Poughkeepsie water.

Q Just drinking the water on the golf course. It's all right. It's

well water.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, that's good, too. That's the reason for going down there.

MR. CHARLES DALY: What does one drink when one gets thirsty in Poughkeepsie?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: Charlie, what a question!

MR. CHARLES DALY: I just got here this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Tell him about the chlorine. Not the chorine, the chlorine. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #753,
Executive Offices of the President,
July 8, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (speaking softly) I think we ought to have a name for Earl. (Earl Godwin) The last gentleman there we called him 'Dean'. Do you think we ought to call him 'Deacon'?

MR. GODWIN: They call Hassett 'Deacon' you know.

THE PRESIDENT: Deacon! That's all right -- take the name away from Hassett.

MR. GODWIN: Deacon!

THE PRESIDENT: I wonder if any of this mob wants me to answer those fool questions?

MR. GODWIN: What?

THE PRESIDENT: I wonder if any of this mob wants me to answer those fool questions?

MR. GODWIN: Lots of them. (he laughs)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) That's a funny one, isn't it? (he laughs again)
(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: (speaking normally) I haven't got anything of any excitement at all; but as you know, sometimes in my mail I get things that are pretty appealing, from the human interest point of view. And I got the other day a letter I thought that would interest you. I shall read it to you. It is, for example -- it is from a man in the State of Missouri. Of course I can't tell you his name. I thought I would read it to you. Dated 29th of June -- just before

the Fourth of July. (reading)

"Dear President Roosevelt:

"I am a married man, 28 years old -- boy, three -- girl, one. Here is how I feel about being an American. My ancestors were Czechoslovakians. My wife's English, but we are Americans. I look at my refrigerator, my oil heater, and my radio, and glad I am an American. My children get cod liver oil, nourishing food, and a doctor's watchful care. They will be glad they are Americans.

"This morning I went to church among my neighbors, unafraid and unmolested. I thank God for giving us America.

"I went home today to my wife and kiddies. My little boy Douglas came running and said, 'Hi, pop, you're gonna take me to see the ribber?' And I said, 'Sure, Doug, I will take you to see the river.' 'And we will stand on the bridge and see the cars, pop?' 'Sure, Doug.' 'Pop, see the sun -- look, see, pop, the shine on the car windows.' 'Yes, Doug, the sun shines on all America.'

"After our walk, we came home and had dinner -- two veal chops and baked potatoes and fresh green beans, corn-on-the-cob. I said grace with tears in my eyes. I am so happy I am an American. This afternoon we listened to a radio broadcast of British children here in America talking to their parents in England, and I was proud to be an American.

"And tomorrow I will go to work. I work in an electro-type foundry, and I love my job. I made it, in fact, from errand boy to production manager in two years. I just had ideas and I told the boss about them. He is an American.

"Tonight before going to bed I told my wife, 'Honey, I am going to buy a large flag and hang it out of the window on Friday. The President wants everyone to pledge allegiance to a new and united America, and, Honey, I am going to do my part, because I would rather be an American than anything else on earth.'"

I think that's rather a nice letter. (murmur of approval)

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't got anything that I can tell you.

Q Mr. President, before we get into Iceland, I was wondering whether you could tell me ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) We are in Iceland. (loud laughter)

Q (continuing) I wonder if you could tell me whether you have decided on that Puerto Rican Judge yet? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't. (turning) Steve, will you remind me to find out about the Puerto Rican Judge?

Q Now that the Ice(land) has been broken, Mr. President -- (laughter) -- can you tell us anything about the prospect for diplomatic recognition and appointment ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Diplomatic relations with Iceland?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It will be -- it will be initiated by -- well, you will have to ask the State Department. I don't know whether I send a name up to the Senate first or whether I ask for an appropriation first, you see.

MR. GODWIN: You send a name up to Congress for its agreement, in order that a diplomatic representative may be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, in two ways, the nomination of somebody to be minister, and an appropriation to pay the costs and expenses of a legation. Now, which comes first, I don't know. They might come simultaneously.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, were you aware of any intention on the part of Germany, or any other country, to occupy Iceland? I think you make it pretty clear.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that I can answer that question categorically any more than any similar question. In war, one puts oneself more or less in the place of the other fellow. Sometimes one has information that leads one to do it. Sometimes one hasn't. One

asks what the other side would do. One asks what would you do yourself, if you were in the position of the other fellow. Sometimes I say it is based on information. Sometimes it isn't.

Q Mr. President, do you think the other fellow is liable to make any move toward the Azores or Cape Verde Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't prognosticate.

Q Do you have any comment to make on the prognostication of some of the -- a particular Senator about Iceland?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think the case speaks for itself.

Q Mr. President, would it be proper to ask whether we have any troops in Greenland at the present time?

THE PRESIDENT: That would not be proper at this time, because it -- the answer to it might expose military information.

Q It might disclose what, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q It might disclose what, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Military information.

Q Mr. President, can you say are there plans afoot to establish an airline service between the United States and Iceland?

THE PRESIDENT: What kind of an airline service?

Q I don't know. There is a report from London saying that such has been contemplated. I believe Icelandic circles assert it.

THE PRESIDENT: A civilian commercial service?

Q It didn't say.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, what is the status of the price-control legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't heard of it since I got back.

Q What about General Marshall's recommendations for detention in the

Service of the National Guard and Selectees?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think I can only talk about that by way of background, by giving you some illustrations.

A year ago, we had a regular Army in this country that was pretty well trained, but of rather small size. It did not, of course, include the troops in the Philippines or Hawaii or Canal Zone. It was very small, and as in the World War, instead of retaining those troops which amounted to, as I remember it -- oh, what? -- roughly 150 to 200,000 trained troops with trained officers -- as in the case of the World War, we used them for the training of the new Army.

In other words, in each unit, whether it was a brigade or a division, we took a certain portion of the regular Army and added to it another portion from the National Guard, and then added a still third portion from the Selectees, and built up, on the nucleus of the regular Army, a very large number of units -- battalions and brigades, and divisions, and corps; with the result that in all of the present divisions you have a complete mixture, which was necessary for training purposes, of three different groups of people -- the regular Army, and National Guard and Selectees. And in any one unit the same thing applies to the officer personnel in a -- going down to the lowest unit, which is the company.

Where's Pa? (Major General Edwin M. Watson) Is he there? (looking around) I don't know if I am talking military correctly. In a company, for instance, the non-commissioned officers -- some of them may be at the present moment -- may be old line regular Army, some may be National Guard. Some of the corporals, and sergeants

may have come from the ranks of the Selectees. In other words, they are all put together into an American force.

Now we are confronted with certain problems at the present time, which of course are inevitable if we created this Army in the way -- the only practicable way to create it. We have certain of these units in different places, where we are up against physical problems.

If, for example, -- in Hawaii -- we have an anti-aircraft detachment, which is a part of the defenses of Hawaii, but which contains a very major proportion of National Guard and Selectees, the time's approaching when we might have to bring the major portion of that battalion, or unit, back home and have left a minor portion of the battalion or unit, which would immediately lose its efficiency, because it would only be a small unit that would have to be replaced with raw material. Now that would mean, of course, the loss not only of privates but also of non-commissioned officers, and commissioned officers belonging to the National Guard, or the Selectees.

The same thing is true in Alaska. The same thing would be true in Panama. The same thing would be true in Bermuda or Trinidad or Newfoundland, and it means, of course, a very distinct difficulty in maintaining, at a rather critical juncture, the efficiency of the army unit. And, of course, the whole theory of modern warfare is based on efficiency of the unit. And that really is the present problem that is before the Congress.

Q Er -- the implication to that is that not all of the Selectees, not all the National Guard men would be retained, only enough to keep up the efficiency?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know. That is a thing you would have to

ask General Marshall, because I never took that part of it up with him.

MR. GODWIN: But there is another -- there is another item in his recommendation which has to do with restrictive legislation that keeps the army down, and particularly with respect to going out of this Hemisphere. I don't know whether that is important or not, but it has been made a basis for discussion.

THE PRESIDENT: It might or might not be.

MR. GODWIN: Have you anything further on that?

THE PRESIDENT: It might or might not be. You take the case of Iceland. It is a perfectly practicable thing. In the first place, you will ask the question, is it or isn't it in the Western Hemisphere?

MR. GODWIN: What do you think?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on which geographer I consulted last.

MR. GODWIN: Well, as I understand the statement -- (the President laughs) -- the State Department has it straddling.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on your geographer.

MR. GODWIN: Well, I didn't mean to be facetious about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that really is beside the -- it always reminds me -- sometimes when you try to draw an imaginary line it leads one to ---. I remember a great many years ago, I was going up the north cape of Norway, in one of those cruise boats. We were standing at the rail up there and somebody said -- there was an old lady standing by me -- and somebody said, "By Jove, we have just crossed the Arctic Circle!" And she said, "Where? I don't see it." (laughter)

Q Mr. President, the last time you gave us the imaginary line, it ran

between Iceland and Greenland. Has there been a shift in that location?

THE PRESIDENT: That is, as I say, depending on the geographer I had seen the previous night. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Well, in any spot, does that meet ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I tried very hard for a week to see if it was possible to draw a line of demarcation. Well, I gave it up.

MR. GODWIN: I think possibly, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There are, for example, points -- probably they are in the Western Hemisphere, one was or the other -- which are not the least bit important for the defense of the Hemisphere. Now, what do we do? There may be some other points that from the geographer's point of view lie just outside of the Western Hemisphere which are terribly important to Hemispheric defense. That is why you can't draw an imaginary line and put a buoy on it.

MR. GODWIN: Well, the restrictive legislation that General Marshall mentions I think is more important than the argument over the line.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Now have you anything further to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think -- of course the important thing is -- is the breaking up of existing efficient units of the army. That's the real thing.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Do you plan a message or any recommendation to the Congress on General Marshall's recommendation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think they understand pretty well what the problem is before them.

Q Mr. President ---
(interposing)

Q /Can you tell us something about your conference with Mr. Murray today?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't think -- we saw each other as we do every few weeks.

Q He talked particularly to you, did he not, about this pending legislation in Congress -- the Vinson bill, and May bill ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes, and because we had about eleven or fifteen or nineteen of them, we found it a little difficult. We didn't have the text of any of it before us. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, the Maritime Commission has ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q The Maritime Commission has submitted a program for further construction of merchant vessels. Could you give us some idea as to how many vessels are contemplated?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen that program. I knew there was one in process. Of course, it is about time for a new program, because a great many of the ships under the old program are beginning to reach the point when we ought to order material for new ships to replace them when they go down the ways.

Q Do you feel that the original -- that the original two-million-ton program has been filled?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I haven't got the program yet.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: (after getting up) They say there's good trout fishing in Iceland.

THE PRESIDENT: They say it's grand.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #754,
Executive Office of the President
July 11, 1941 -- 10.50 A.M., E.S.T.

MR. GODWIN: (to the President) How are you?

(the President nods)

MR. GODWIN: Oh, my!

You have got Commissioner Young working. He works all the time. He doesn't have any time off. He has got the police investigation.

THE PRESIDENT: That's not his own field, is it?

MR. GODWIN: Well, he is taking that field because Hazen is a little bit weak ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Of course.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing)--- and somebody has got to be up there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: He is doing a good job. Really you ought to be proud of him. He's all right. He has given a lot of good thought to it.

(pause here)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you have got yesterday the -- er -- supplementary Army estimates, and I have two more today that are going up to Congress this morning. One for the Navy, totaling one billion 625 million, and the other for the Maritime Commission -- I'll come to that later.

The Navy estimates are for a great many things. The larger items are 400 million for the maintenance and repair of defense installations in Government or privately owned merchant ships. Er -- 249 million for ordinance and ordinance stores. About 300

million for pay and subsistence, and clothing -- medical care.

Public works about 300 million. That includes housing, and different equipment for Navy Yards, and so forth -- oh, a lot of items. 90 million for aviation. About 90 million for the Marines. 160 million for repairs. Well, that's about all.

Q Sir, does that 90 million for aviation include plane purchases, or is that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, the first item that you mention -- the breakdown of 400 million for maintenance and repair of defense installations in Government or privately owned merchant ships -- sounds interesting. Does that mean arming merchant ships?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no. Just the ships we are taking over.

Q In that first item of 400 million -- for maintenance and repair of merchant ships -- you mentioned 160 million for repairs. What kind of vessels are those?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you.

Q Is part of that repair for British vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, does the 90 million on Marines mean a big increase in Marines, or is that for equipment, and so forth?

THE PRESIDENT: Everything to do with Marines.

Q (interposing) Well, does that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They are coming in -- the answer is very simple -- they are coming in faster than we had expected them to.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) But Marines in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Nearly all of this whole estimate was

caused by the fact that things are ahead of schedule on everything. Practically every item. It means we are ahead of schedule, and we have to ask for the money now, instead of next January.

MR. GODWIN: Well, sir, has it anything to do with the wider policy ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Nothing at all. Not a blessed thing. Can't get any story out of it. It's just because we are ahead of schedule.

Q Mr. President, does the increase in appropriation mean that there will also be an increase in request for taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Request for taxes?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Taxes.

Q (continuing) Increased taxes. They were going to have two-thirds paid by taxes and one-third by borrowing. Now this increase means it is upsetting the balance.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, after all, I suppose the easiest answer to that is that you have a tax bill about every year, and you don't base your tax bill on individual supplementary estimates. You take the one at the end of the year. Now there is one tax bill that is on the way through at the present time, and I assume there will be another tax bill to be sent which is based on the one we have at that time. We don't put any tax bill through every time we send a deficiency estimate up. (he laughs)

Q Well, Mr. Morgenthau said something -- not very definite about it, which is the reason I add this.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is the easiest way. We haven't an annual tax bill.

Then the other one is the Maritime Commission. We are asking

698 million in cash. That is to say in appropriations, which includes -- what's the easiest way of putting it? -- we are also asking a contract -- oh, wait a minute -- (looking at his papers) contract authorization for a billion dollars. Now, actually, we are asking a billion 296 of contract authorization, but we are asking 296 -- er -- immediate cash under that, and that is included in the item of 698. So your -- your total is one billion 698.

You see the point?

MR. GODWIN: For what?

Q (softly) No.

Q (softly) No.

THE PRESIDENT: That is primarily for a construction fund. More ships.

Q How many ships does that apply for, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: A great many. (laughter)

And the real reason for this is that again the schedule -- the program is going ahead of schedule. And obviously, when you are going ahead of schedule, you have got to get the money quicker. If -- take the simple example -- if a ship was to be -- go off the ways next March, we wouldn't need to order the material for a new ship, to take her place on the ways, much before December. But if a ship is going off the ways six months ahead of time, we have got to order the material for a ship to take her place six months ahead of December. And of course our every indication is that they will turn out ships faster than we hoped.

MR. GODWIN: They gave me the idea that they were using all the shipways that we had in the country. I guess that's your impression too?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Does this mean more shipyards by any chance?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- yes and no. It means -- it means carrying out more quickly than we had expected certain -- a few -- planned shipyards on which very little has been done -- or we are all ready to go ahead with them -- but it is nearly all the old -- the existing ways.

Q Mr. President, can you say anything about the type of ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't.

Q Mr. President, is the Maritime Commission about ready to put to work all the Italian and German ships that we have taken over in our ports?

THE PRESIDENT: I'd say that we would begin to get delivery of the repaired ships pretty soon, and of course they -- the schedule depends on the amount of damage in the case of each ship.

Q Mr. President, are these new ships to be used generally?

THE PRESIDENT: To be used what?

Q General use?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got the faintest idea.

Q Could you tell us any more about this item for the maintenance and repair of defense installations on merchant ships, and defense facilities?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't got any breakdown on that.

Q What is the ---

MR. GODWIN: The first item of 400 million dollars he is talking about -- in the Navy. The one I asked you about.

THE PRESIDENT: (pausing) Well, I haven't got any breakdown on it at all. It simply says maintenance, Bureau of Ships, including maintenance and repair of various installations in Government or privately owned merchant ships.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It merely includes it -- I suppose the great bulk of it would be Navy ships.

MR. GODWIN: Well, that is bound to be construed, Mr. President, as a --- suggestion let me put it -- the possibility that merchant ships are being armed now.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that includes that, and I think there are -- as a matter of fact, we will take certain measures. You have heard of 'degaussing'.

Q What?

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine they would include 'degaussing' against magnetic mines, but the great bulk of that 400 million undoubtedly is for Navy ships.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, the entire business of 'degaussing', according to the deficiency report, only costs about \$30,000. a ship. Would this include converting merchant ships and vessels for Navy use then?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I suppose it would. What about the \$30,000.?

Q That's the estimated cost of 'degaussing' a ship.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a new one on me.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President --

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Where did you read that?

Q Deficiency appropriation hearings, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. (he laughs)

As a matter of fact, when you convert a ship to a certain type of Navy use, you spend more money on the conversion process than you

do on the cost of the ship -- obviously.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, there seems to be some substantiation from abroad this morning in the stories of American work bases, or whatever it is, in Scotland or Ireland, or both. Have you anything to say about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Whatever's done has been done under one of two things. Either straight purchase by the British government, or lend-lease bill. I shouldn't be surprised -- only you have got to be fair and put it this way -- I shouldn't be the least bit surprised if American steel, for example, had gone into fifty bases -- British bases -- in the British Isles and Canada, and God knows where -- South Africa. I don't know. And I have no doubt that there are a great many American workmen that are working all over the world, being paid for by the British government, which is of course perfectly legal.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, Mr. Willkie, after seeing you the other day, suggested that we ourselves establish bases in Ireland. Is there anything like that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think there is any comment necessary.

Q I didn't hear that.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any comment.

Q Mr. President, have you any plans to go to Ottawa this month or next?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q None at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have no plans to go anywhere.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: I just live on a day-to-day basis.

Q Have you decided upon anyone for the vacancy on the FCC?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no.

MR. GODWIN: Eddie Roddan (Democratic National Committee publicity staff)

has that job, according to some columnists. Did you know that?

THE PRESIDENT: Has he? No. (laughter)

Q Is there anything on an appointment for Attorney General?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nothing at present.

Q In connection with the supplemental estimates, when does the lend-

lease supplement -- the new lend-lease program go up?

THE PRESIDENT: They are working on it. I don't know.

Q This week sometime?

THE PRESIDENT: No. ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- I don't think so. As far as I know,

they are not ready on that.

Q Those letters are going to the Speaker of the House?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, do you think it is necessary, in order to prevent in-

flation, to impose a freezing of prices at any existing level?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. (the President laughs)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #755,
Executive Office of the President,
July 15, 1941 -- 4.03 P.M., E.S.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am very sorry to hear this morning of Commissioner Hazen's death. (Melvin C. Hazen, President of the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia) I really feel that it is going to be a very great loss to the District, because that term of affection which a great many people used -- "grand old man of the District" -- was very well bestowed. I don't know of anybody in the District that has been more public-spirited than he has been in a very large number of years. Even long before he held office I knew him quite well back in the old days of the Wilson administration. He is going to be very much missed.

I don't think I have anything at all today. You will probably ask about the meeting this morning with Chairman Doughton and Representative Cooper.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't anything particular to say, except that we discussed tax legislation in a general way -- certain items. And that's about all there is to be said.

MR. GODWIN: Does that have to do with current legislation, or proposed legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Current?

THE PRESIDENT: I mean the current bill that is before the committee.

Q Mr. President, did you discuss joint returns?

THE PRESIDENT: Mm -- no.

Q Was there any decision reached about the three ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) This is not a matter for decision. Just general.

Q Is there any discussion about going above the figure?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The 3 billion five hundred million?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, when this first Treasury -- when the Congress first began discussing the new tax bill, Mr. Morgenthau had a formula of two-thirds taxes and one-third borrowing.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) That is working out all right in the present bill, but it won't work out ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course not. I answered that the other day. This tax bill originated -- what was it? -- three months ago -- two or three months ago -- to make certain expenditure demands -- it might be called the 1941 tax bill -- and the last press conference -- somebody said, "You are going to raise the money to pay these new supplementary estimates that have come in?" And I think I said, "No, certainly not. That would be a matter which would be met by the next tax bill, and in all probability in times like these we will have to have an annual tax bill."

Q Mr. President, have you been kept informed on the Peruvian-Ecuadorean difficulty?

THE PRESIDENT: More or less.

Q Er -- have you any comment on the progress that they have been making?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, better ask the State Department.

MR. GODWIN: Sir, have you anything to say further about the matter of General Marshall -- War Department's various recommendations -- time, and limitations, and so forth?

THE PRESIDENT: Only this -- that I think it is a very simple choice to make, as to whether in times like these you want to disintegrate the Army of the United States or not, and the responsibility, of course, is squarely up to the Congress as to what change is made in the present law. The Army of the United States, which is one of the -- at the present time one of the smallest armies in the world -- (he laughs) -- would be disintegrated. Roughly two-thirds of it would go back to private life, and their places would be taken by a two-thirds fill-in of untrained officers and men, and that is why the matter is so serious.

MR. GODWIN: The two-thirds includes the National Guard?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, is Iceland in the Western Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, don't ask any more silly questions. (he laughs) That has been discussed backwards and forwards.

Q May I revert to this thing that you were explaining. It seems to be the general impression that you will address the Congress, or send some message over on that subject.

THE PRESIDENT: Honestly, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, to make that tax matter a little more definite, Chairman Doughton said after the conference that he is opposed to any higher tax bill this year than the one that they are already working on. Could we say that that represents your feeling too?

THE PRESIDENT: No. All you can say is, just as I have said before this, the question of raising 3 billion 500 million did not come up.

Q What is the status of the lend-lease appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, you mean a new one?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any yet.

Q Is it in prospect?

THE PRESIDENT: It's being studied still. I haven't had any recommendations even.

Q Can you tell us about your conference today with Leon Henderson and Wayne Coy on price control?

THE PRESIDENT: Made progress. That's all. They are taking it up on the Hill. In other words, it might be called a three-cornered state of conversations.

Q Here?

THE PRESIDENT: Wayne, Leon, and myself.

MR. GODWIN: Is there any reason for leaving out the State of Maryland from this letter to Congress on the subject of Daylight Saving?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. W. H. MYLANDER: Mr. President, on this matter of Daylight Saving, the people of Toledo, Ohio -- at least my city editor (laughter) -- complains that school children will be going to school in the dark. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't it more important whether they go home in the dark? (he laughs)

MR. W. H. MYLANDER: The sun doesn't rise until after eight o'clock out there. They belong to the Central time belt, and they operate on Standard time.

THE PRESIDENT: Give it up. They are still having an awful time down in Warm Springs as to whether they are on Eastern Standard or Central Standard. I don't know when it will be ended. They have been talking about it for twenty years.

Q Mr. President, in this Daylight Saving extension over the country, communities which already have Daylight Saving -- Chicago for instance -- which has Daylight Saving or Central Standard, and now Eastern -- you wouldn't move them another hour?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope not. (he laughs)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It's a question of saving very much needed power in certain parts of the country, thereby increasing the defense effort.

Q Mr. President, did you receive the cheese and beer which Governor Heil of Wisconsin sent you? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I received -- I received and have eaten some of the cheese. I believe I have received the beer, but I haven't -- I haven't had any yet.

Q You did not send the cheese to the British then?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You did not send the cheese to the British? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. (he laughs)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That is being saved for the White House.

Q Mr. President, in regard to the matter of oil supplies, there are reports that 50 to 75 more tankers may be taken off the Gulf Atlantic coast run. Has that matter been taken up with you?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Haven't heard of it.

Q Mr. President, is there anything further you can say in regard to activities of German representatives or agents in this country? I have in mind particularly Mayor LaGuardia's statement against them.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Of course, I will have to give you this as background only. There have been in regard to the Eastern war -- and the Western war -- a lot of very well-meaning people in this country who have been told by somebody in the Far East, or somebody in Europe -- not in the Government -- but some person fairly high up -- not in the Government -- that it would be perfectly grand if there could be a peace worked out. Well now, these perfectly well-meaning American citizens rush down to Washington and tell us about it. Well, that's about all there is to it. You get that kind of thing almost every time from somewhere, nearly always from well-meaning sources. I have to admit that in some cases it has looked like a plant. And that is all I can say.

Q Mr. President, one of the largest papers in the country carried a rather circumstantial story that the Hess proposal was that the British Empire and the British Fleet should be retained intact. There hasn't been anything of that kind has there, or something come to you?

THE PRESIDENT: I must say the circumstantial story that you discuss in this great influential paper is unknown even to Mr. Churchill.

Q You mean the paper is?

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, in this three-corner discussion on prices, I wonder if you would give us some background about the various questions involved in the price control situation?

THE PRESIDENT: It's so long that I would probably overlook some of the essential things. There are a number of elements involved, and one of the proposals is whether they should all be put into one bill, or separate bills. Well, I will give you an example. After all, what we are after is an objective, and if it is better to put them into separate bills, in order to get it through, it's perfectly all right. That is a legislative matter.

For example, the question of rents. You and I know an awful lot of -- er-- lobbyists here that don't want rents touched. I don't mean the District -- of course in the District that is true -- but in nearby Maryland, and nearby Virginia, and a lot of other places where there is a shortage and where rents are very greatly mounting. Well, it is -- that is a different -- that is a different problem in a way from the question of a price limit on food-stuffs, and yet it does hit an awful lot of families. We had a certain legal control over that during the World War right here. As I remember it, we did not have that control all over the United States. It was a general law. It's a little bit -- that particular phase of the subject might be put into a separate bill. I have always felt that for something -- that if you can curb excessive prices of food-stuffs or clothing -- things like that -- at the same time you should curb excessive charges for rent. And there are various ways of working it out --

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- to go into the same bill ---

MR. GODWIN: (softly) Excuse me.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- or separate bill, I don't know.

MR. P. BRANDT: What about wages, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. P. BRANDT: What about wages?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, we are trying to keep things pretty well in balance, Pete. That is all I can say.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, that rent situation -- you and I both remember -- the Ball Rent Act, under which rents were administered here. They took each particular instance and went into each one, which was not freezing in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Of course, that's right.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) And that had to do with governmental employees largely, if you don't mind my refreshing your memory.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. Yes, of course, there are two or three different methods. For instance, one method that has been suggested is to -- in those areas where there is a large demand for housing, and rents have started to go up, that the Congress itself, instead of leaving it to somebody else, should put a ceiling on what the total -- what the maximum increase in rents should be, as compared -- as compared with some base period. We do it on earnings, on corporations, and so forth, on the base-period method, and we might take the base period of what the rents were in 19 -- what? -- 38, 39 and 40, and put a ceiling -- a limit -- over an increase on that figure -- some percentage. 10 or 15 or 20 or 25 -- whatever Congress should determine.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, do you -- speaking of separate bills, does that mean that the Baruch Plan of a universal ceiling is out?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it.

MR. P. BRANDT: The Baruch Plan?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. P. BRANDT: The Baruch Plan?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It's a new one on me.

MR. P. BRANDT: It has been written about. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, I must -- I must be mean and say does that prove one hill of beans? (he laughs)

Q What would be the object of a separate bill, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What would be the purpose of separate bills?

THE PRESIDENT: Easiest to put through Congress.

Q Mr. President, may we return to this proposed extension of time for men in the Service, for a minute?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The proposed extension of time for men in the Service? I think one of the arguments which has made some headway is a "breaking of the faith".

THE PRESIDENT: I think it was put pretty well - I don't indorse the whole article, but Gould Lincoln today had a story that pointed out that very same thing, that a year ago as conditions were in the world, the Congress did not want to commit itself for too far ahead. Didn't know what the conditions would be a year later. Therefore they put it in, with the proviso that if at the end of that year it was necessary to keep the men in the Service, it could be done by one of two methods:

One was by the declaration of a national emergency by the Congress, which would do it automatically; and the other by an amend-

ment of the law. And when the men came in they came in under the whole clause and not just part of the clause. They came in for a year, subject to Congressional action. Well, that was the contract, and therefore it isn't breaking faith for Congress to act. Gould had it very well in his paper.

Q Have you any preference between those two methods?

THE PRESIDENT: It's entirely up to Congress.

Q Mr. President, if I may for a minute return to the price question, do you think that it would be better to control commodity prices by freezing them as of a certain date rather than by fixing ceilings on certain big commodities?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think you can give a general -- a reply to that as a general question. I think it depends a great deal on the article, perhaps even the locality.

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #756,
Executive Office of the President,
July 18, 1941 -- 10.50 A.M., E.S.T.

(The President reads over some typed sheets as the newspapermen
file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything today, except that I am
sending up to Congress next week -- I don't know what day exactly --
a Message on the Army, to avoid complete disintegration of the Army.
In general terms -- because, as we said last week, the burden is
very definitely on the Congress. Outside of that, I don't think
I have anything.

MR. GODWIN: Sir, are you going to read that message yourself?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. No.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: Mr. President, could you tell us what is being
done to keep the sea lanes to Iceland open?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably the only thing I can do is to refer to
the message, which was perfectly definite and perfectly clear, and
about which there can be -- er-- nothing further said, unless it
is pure speculation, which must of necessity be pure speculation.

The facts are, first, that -- to repeat in the vernacular --
that -- er -- it is felt by all military authorities, who have the
best access to not only information but to the defense needs of
the nation, and of the hemisphere, that the possible occupation
of Iceland by an unfriendly power would be a serious blow to national
and hemisphere defense. For that reason, from the military defense
point of view, it was necessary to help keep out any hostile power,

by the occupation of Iceland, a portion of which has already been accomplished. I am most certainly not going to tell you the future movement of troops. In other words, I don't think that it is right that I should pull a 'Wheeler'. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: How about quoting that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, you can quote that. (laughter)

Then comes that -- being the policy of the United States -- comes the second part of the question: Having occupied Iceland, are we going to leave the American garrison in Iceland to its own devices, or are we going to protect it? There may be some people in this country that say we shouldn't protect it. Obviously we have to. Equally obviously, we have to maintain the lines of communication -- safe -- open -- and that is why I said in the message to Congress, two things.

First, communications between the United States and United States naval bases on the one side -- well, that means Bermuda, Newfoundland, and Iceland at the other end of the line -- will be kept open, obviously. You can't maintain a garrison in Iceland and not maintain the lines of communication. Just A-B-C stuff, and it can't be distorted.

Secondly, that in the protection of such communications they will be protected against what? -- attack, or threat of attack. Well, that's about all there is to say. Now there's nobody in this room that can define what 'threat of attack' is. I can't. Threat of attack! And the orders are to keep the communications open against attack, or threat of attack. Now there is nothing else to be said. Now that you have all had for two weeks, but

when you get to the speculative end of things you are not writing new stories. That is about all there is. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, do you wish to make any observations supplementary to the publication yesterday of the list of blocked nationals?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. The -- is the list going to be given out?

MR. GODWIN: It's out.

Q Yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: It's out? As you know, that list will be -- I suppose the -- some names will be taken off and some other names will be added. In other words, it is a fluid list.

Q Mr. President, on Wednesday, Chairman Olds gave you a plan for a Government corporation to buy generators, and allocate them to the utilities. I wonder if you could comment on that, and tell us what is being done about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got the memo right here on that subject. It is rather a technical matter. The steam generator manufacturers are working at full capacity on machines to be delivered this year and 1942, and in that memo will be, I suppose, the defense of our program for proceeding as rapidly as possible, so far as this year and next are concerned. They might possibly establish a complete power program, much of it -- that is, from 1943 to 1946 -- much of the program will be carried out by private financing.

The public part of the program under the National Defense Act of 1916, the President is authorized to build and operate steam and hydro plants useful for manufacturing defense materials. That authority was used to build Wilson Dam and the auxiliary steam

plants at Muscle Shoals. This authority can be delegated to such agencies of the Army ~~and~~ Engineers, T.V.A., and Interior. The R.F.C. under existing law, through a subsidiary like the defense plant corporation, can operate the money to build the plants. The R.F.C. subsidiary of that kind can, in the case of machine tools, insure the maintenance of a full log and future orders for generators, making sure that the manufacturers are sufficiently occupied. Well, that's about all there is. Think it's going along all right.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, have you received the letter from Colonel Lindbergh, suggesting that Mr. Ickes apologize?

THE PRESIDENT: I saw -- the press received a letter. I don't know whether I have got it --- (turning to Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: (interposing) I checked with Rudolph Forster this morning. The letter has not yet been received.

Q Mr. President, with this message can you send troops outside the Western Hemisphere?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q General Marshall testified yesterday that you were using your 'discretionary department' for the financing of naval bases in Brazil.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Flying fields.

Q Flying fields?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Can you say whether any other countries are involved?

THE PRESIDENT: No; can't tell you. (he laughs)

Q How much ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Hemisphere defense.

Q Oh, Hemisphere defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Countries other than Brazil?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q More than Brazil?

THE PRESIDENT: That I can't tell you. Call it strategic points.

Q Points?

THE PRESIDENT: Strategic points.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us how soon the Government is likely to get started on the construction of these new aluminum plants that it is going to build?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. I don't know what the schedule is. Just that a lot is needed.

Q Er -- Mr. President, in your message to Congress, the first report on lend-lease, you said something about negotiations to set the terms of repayment for lend-lease assistance to Britain. I wonder if you could tell us what is being discussed in the way ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think there is any news on that yet. They are still talking about it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Obviously it can't be very detailed. It's got to be general principles.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: In that connection, sir, is there anything that would prevent Britain -- say we send wheat -- from selling it at a price greater than the price we quoted to her? In other words, could Britain make a profit on any lend-lease material?

THE PRESIDENT: I doubt if there is any desire on the part of Britain to make any profit on food, for the nation or anywhere else.

MR. DOUGLAS CORNELL: Well, let's not limit it to food then.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, anything else. I don't believe that anybody would want to do that. That wouldn't be quite -- quite --

Q Cricket?

THE PRESIDENT: According to Hoyle.

Q Cricket.

THE PRESIDENT: Cricket, that's the word. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. EARLY: (to the President) Did you hear little Fala during your Press Conference?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, he's an esquimaux dog.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #757,
Executive Offices of the President,
July 22, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Jack, (Captain John Beardall) is that clear, or what?

(Captain Beardall comes over and confers with the President
about a telegram the President is holding and reading)

THE PRESIDENT: (TO MR. GODWIN) I scooped you on that Commissionership.

(referring to the appointment of Guy Mason as Commissioner of the
District of Columbia to succeed Melvin C. Hazen)

MR. GODWIN: I knew about it.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: I knew about it.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Two minutes before it went up to the Senate!

MR. GODWIN: No, fifteen. (the President laughs) That's all right,
though. It's okay.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (he laughs again)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't have any news until about one minute ago, and
Captain Beardall handed me a copy of a dispatch that just came in
to the Navy Department, that today they established a radio and
cable censorship in Japan, and that -- er -- the details -- er --
are being sent to all Washington and New York offices of the R.C.A.
and cable companies. So you can check on that.

Q Is that an official Japanese government censorship, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, do you expect an aggressive move -- aggressive move by
Japan in the near future?

THE PRESIDENT: Ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us when you expect to fill the vacancy in your Cabinet?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can you tell us when you are going to appoint an Attorney General?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet.

Q You have someone in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet.

Q Mr. President, have you read the speech Mr. Welles is delivering at the Norwegian Legation this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Didn't know he was.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Welles said yesterday that he has information leading him to believe that Germany will make new acts of aggression in Europe. Could you elaborate on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better ask him.

Q Mr. President, is it expected that the black list of those 1800 firms in Central and South America will prevent any further danger of nazi influence in Latin America?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. I wouldn't go so far as to say that.

Q Are any further steps in mind?

THE PRESIDENT: Maybe.

Q Mr. President, in your Message yesterday, you didn't say anything about the possible repeal of the prohibition against using Selectees outside of American territory. Is there any move in prospect on that, or has that been put on the shelf?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask them on the Hill. The Message has gone.

Q Mr. President, if Mr. Ickes doesn't know, and Admiral Land, I wonder if

you could tell us are we going to give one hundred more tankers to Great Britain?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't even seen them. I mean Mr. Ickes and Land, not the tankers. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, has the Administration taken any recent action to try to get the American oil companies and the Mexican government into line on the expropriated oil?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. I haven't -- I haven't heard of that particular subject, oh -- for over a month. You had better ask the State Department. I haven't heard about it at all.

Q Mr. President, what do you think about soldiers writing to their Congressmen protesting against being kept in Service?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news on that.

Q Mr. President, I see David Coyle's book on your desk. What do you think of it?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's a good book. (laughter) I think the other one is too -- "You Can't Do Business With Hitler" -- which I have just begun to read, by Douglas Miller. It really is. It's an amazing book.

Q Did you see the ad which was in the paper this morning -- by Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I got it even before that. (laughter) I got -- it's what you might call -- advance information.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Did you get a report with government advance information, Mr. President, regarding the 50% cut in automobile production?

THE PRESIDENT: What did I do?

Q Regarding the 50% cut ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, no. Of course, I think probably -- I think probably general curtailment, not only of automobiles for civilian use, but other things like -- what? -- iceboxes -- that we ought to use the -- the word, in so far as the manufacturing goes, and the labor involved, we are all using the word 'curtailment'. Well, it is not. The real word is 'substitute' -- 'substitution'. In other words, it's not a cutting-off of the manufacturing, it is substitution of manufacturing something else with the same plants, and largely the same tools, and the same workmen. One article in place of another article.

MR. JOHN HENRY: You don't mean the horse and buggy, do you, sir? (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: No, that particular phase of it was ended, so far as news went, soon after 1937. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Well, you mean that they are not making iceboxes, but they are making something else?

THE PRESIDENT: Something else, that's it. It is a substitute of manufacturing, that's the real way of putting it.

Q Mr. President, the point they make on it is that it takes time to substitute, that is, that you can't transfer an automobile plant to making something else in a month or two months.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Sure. What O.P.M. and O.P.A.C.S. are trying to do is not to cut off one day and wait to put a substitute in several months later. The effort is to tide that interim period over.

Q Well, we understand from that -- that -- you understand that they will develop by a gradual process?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Did Mr. Henderson discuss his Order with you before he issued it, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I have been talking to people about it for about a year. Lots of people.

Q Mr. President, you said 'maybe' on further steps to be taken about German infiltration into South America. Could you elaborate at all on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have -- 'maybe' covers it.

Q Would it be trade ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Just 'maybe' covers it.

Q Mr. President, on this automobile cutting down, there has been some question as to the delimitation of authority in such matters, and priority matters generally, by the O.P.M. and O.P.A.C.S., and there was one report that you had an Executive Order on your desk delimiting that authority. I wonder if you could tell us anything about that subject?

THE PRESIDENT: Merely in the gossip columns.

Q In that connection, Mr. President, Mr. Henderson, is he confined entirely to non-defense industry? Is that right?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Mr. Henderson's work, of course, is confined entirely to non-defense industries, and O.P.M., of course, is concerned with defense industries?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. It's a collaboration -- a cooperation -- and all things of that kind that tie them together. The longer you live the more -- the less -- the less -- what shall I say? -- rigid lines appeal to you.

Q Mr. President, referring to that report in the gossip column about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What? A little louder.

Q In that report appearing in the gossip columns, have you delegated yet

the authority given you under the Vinson Act on -- over priorities?

I think that is the Executive Order referred to.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I haven't the faintest idea. I

know that there is nothing stuck on my desk. (he laughs) There

ain't no bottleneck here! (laughter)

Q Mr. President, do you see any significance in that censorship order

from Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: (pausing) Yeah! (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you elaborate on that 'yes'?

THE PRESIDENT: No! (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, certain Senators have been scooping the press on the

military moves of our Government. Has our Government taken any steps

to stop those leakages?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Under present conditions Senators have their full

constitutional prerogatives to say anything that they want -- any

time -- any place.

Q I understand that, but what I mean is, somebody's leaking that stuff

to them, are they not?

THE PRESIDENT: I'd say not any more than you fellows get leaks. You don't

print them. You don't talk them out loud. A few of you do, but not

many. It's a very small percentage. And it's a very small percentage

of Senators that leak stuff to the public that they happen to know.

I'd say about the same proportion as in the press. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, it's an old question, but when the Senators --

a Senator will make a statement on the floor in debate, it is a part of the public record. Newspapers -- the radio -- are almost bound to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Absolutely.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- report them. Have you anything further to say about that? I think you probably said that.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It's a terribly complex problem. Of course, when the Constitution was written, there was no such thing as the transmission of news. If it was -- something was said on the floor of either House where the Congress was meeting -- New York or Philadelphia -- it might be known in New York or Philadelphia, but it would come out in the papers two or three days later maybe, because they didn't print every day, and well, the country didn't know it. But ever since the telegraph came in, and the radio, anything that's said on the floor of either House, of course, is public property inside of an hour. It's something worth thinking about.

Q Mr. President, the Constitution provides for a secret session, in the event that the national good is endangered by debate. Has anybody that you have heard of suggested that that be done?

THE PRESIDENT: Have you ever heard of the effectiveness of any secret session?

Q (softly) No, sir. (laughter)

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, in your conference this morning with Senator Connally and Senator George, and Mr. Welles, did you get a complete fill-in on new international developments?

THE PRESIDENT: No, we were talking over certain rather technical questions of several laws, with the net result that it was decided to do

nothing about them.

Q Did those include the Neutrality Act, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, are you contemplating any new steps to better the collaboration between O.P.A.C.S. and O.P.M.?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, I think things will go on all the time as the program develops. I wouldn't say that categorically at all. I wouldn't say 'No' categorically. It is just every agency of the Government we are trying to improve all the time. Not those specifically.

Q Mr. President, anything being done on defense transportation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Well, it's a very good example of just what was asked. Probably the administration of defense transportation as a whole is serving the needs of defense as it's being conducted at the present time. Now, that doesn't mean that three months or six months from now we may not have to change certain administrative methods. Therefore, we are studying it every day that goes on, and I don't know whether later on we are going to make any changes or not. It's possible. But, as of today, we probably will rock along the way we are going for a while.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #758,
Held in the President's Study
at Hyde Park, N. Y.
July 25, 1941 -- 11.10 A.M., E.D.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what's the news? I haven't got anything. I never have any news up here.

Q Have you talked to the State Department this morning, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I am going to - quarter before one.

Q To Mr. Welles?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Mr. Welles?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That works pretty well. By that time he has seen the press, got the news in the State Department -- it will be a quarter before twelve in Washington - ideal time -- so that they can -- he can tell me what is happening.

Q Er -- in this morning's Times Mr. Krock commented on the great clarity with which you set forth our position on the Japanese situation.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw that.

Q I confess that I am not so certain as Mr. Krock is. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you going into a controversy with him?

Q No, I think not. (laughter) But the supposition has been, sir, that some measures will be taken as a result of the Japanese move into Indo-China.

THE PRESIDENT: I saw the headlines this morning in three papers, and not one of them was based -- this is off the record -- not one of them was based on the news story that happened. As a matter of fact, and as a matter of news, all three headlines were based on the words, "Roosevelt

hints". Now, that's not news. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: Each holds, however.

Q Did you read the text of your speech yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did you read the text of your informal speech yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. Afterwards. (laughter) I edited it, too. (more laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) What you got was not what happened at all.
It was edited.

Q Mr. President, in your remarks of yesterday, you referred to our policy
in the Far East in the past tense.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Sure.

Q (continuing) Which could have been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Describing what had happened up to the time
-- approximate time that that speech ---

Q (interposing) It left the intimation that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now, wait a minute. Wait a minute. (he laughs)

Q (continuing) The intimation I got from it was this policy might be one
that was over. Therefore, for two years it had worked.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't say anything about that.

Q We noticed that ---

Q (interposing) That's what we are trying to get today.

THE PRESIDENT: And you won't get it. (laughter) I don't think there is
any news at all. (pause here) I don't know.

Oh, I know -- I know -- I wrote it down, for the benefit of two new gentlemen here today, representing the New York Herald Tribune and the New York Times. (he laughs) Er -- somebody asked me the question, did I have anything to say about what the Secretary of War said about Senator Wheeler, and my comment was that I agreed with the headings of two editorials that I read this morning. One of them said, "On Dangerous Ground," and the other one said, "Mr. Wheeler Goes Too Far." I think that covers it. And I had to ask the question!

(laughter)

Q We were going to get around to that. (loud laughter)

Q Give us a chance.

Q Mr. President, if there is any action in the Far East, will it be announced from Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely where I am.

Q That would mean then, sir, that that would be announced through you?

Q Through you?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily. I think I can only give you -- I think that there will be something out of Washington tomorrow, but I don't think that will come out here.

Q We would like to have it here.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We would like to have it here.

Q It would be a good story.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't believe it can. It's one of those documentary things.

Q Asking a very blunt, direct question, sir, the American people, at least

I, and I think everybody else are interested in this Japanese standpoint in one thing. What does that mean to this country's neutrality?

Can you say anything about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The Japanese thing?

Q The Japanese situation, what does it mean to our neutrality?

THE PRESIDENT: What part of it?

Q The Japanese move into Indo-China and its implications?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a terribly 'if' question.

Q Yes. Certainly is. But I think that is to the interest of every American in this situation.

THE PRESIDENT: You see, so many things haven't happened. That's about the size of it.

Q Yes, but there are so many horrible things looming, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I know, but you can't talk about things that haven't happened yet. If there was some one definite line that we could bank on, of being the line that would happen, then perhaps we could talk about it. But that's not the situation.

Q But -- it is an 'iffy' question, but don't you think it is a valid question, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that's the answer. If there was something specific that we could count on happening, then we could talk about it, but that isn't the situation.

Q Well, the move yesterday, sir, was a specific, direct move, and was branded by our Government as a danger to our security.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, so far as yesterday's move went. And I don't know what today's move is, or tomorrow's move, or the next day. Quite frankly -- I mean that really is the fact.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Mr. President, in the case of the freezing orders on the Continent, the formula was that when troops entered -- German troops entered other countries, either by invitation or otherwise, there was the element of duress. Therefore the freezing order was slapped on.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Well, Mr. Welles used the term 'duress' twice in his remarks yesterday. I wonder ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. I don't know. But off the record, don't do too much anticipating. But -- but off the record you are getting a little warm, as they call it. (laughter)

Q There is a report from the Treasury, Mr. President, that only four Japanese ships were left in the American harbors. Does that have any ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know. No. I didn't know that myself.

Q After today, Mr. President, will this Government follow the policy which you outlined yesterday? Will it continue to follow that policy?

THE PRESIDENT: That I can't talk about.

Q That policy as you outlined seems to be pretty good beyond certain conditions, sir, which are no longer existent. Therefore ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I can only tell you about it off the record, which will save a lot of questions. I think your intimation about -- off the record -- just so that you can get the idea -- the intimation about it is good. I don't know how many additional steps could be taken. None have been decided on at the present time, and it depends on future developments. There are all kinds of steps, as you know,

that could be taken, and some steps have been taken in other countries, other steps which apply more to the specific area. But frankly, there isn't anything that has been decided on, except this 'hush-hush thing' that is going to happen tomorrow.

Q I assume, sir, that we are free to speculate on our own what might happen tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you can, yes -- what might happen tomorrow, but I wouldn't go beyond that, because frankly I don't know what the next steps will be.

Q That seems to resolve the Japanese situation, sir. I noticed in the New York Times -- a day or so ago -- a dispatch from London which indicated that there was some difficulty, or some dissatisfaction in the relations of this country with Great Britain, in so far as the Lend-Lease program is moving along, and they felt that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think that is so at all.

Q Not so?

Q Have you received any report from Hopkins on the cable or telephone?

THE PRESIDENT: Not for two or three days. He telegraphed everything is going all right. He is seeing heads of different departments over there in regard to general working out of aid. There wasn't anything specific about it. He is getting along all right.

Q Do you expect him to come back via Hyde Park? I noticed he was in Canada yesterday.

THE PRESIDENT: Hopkins in Canada?

Q The United Press carried that story, but they admitted that they were pretty shaky on that. (laughter)

Q It must have been two other people.

THE PRESIDENT: He would have had to have hurried.

Q When do you expect him back?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet. As a matter of fact, he was in London last night.

Q He was?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Would you care to add anything else to this Stimson-Wheeler controversy?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. I think that's a nice compliment -- two very nice papers -- New Deal papers. (laughter)

Q Did you see the text of Mr. Stimson's remarks in advance of their publication?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Anything about this priorities controversy between Mr. Knudsen and Mr. Henderson?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, just as background, I suppose the easiest way of putting it is this: that -- not awfully far apart, as I said in the Cabinet meeting -- one is for the shift over from civilian and private automobiles up to a certain point -- er -- with a little bit -- of course, tying the things -- making it a gradual thing -- er -- doing the gradual process a little faster; and the other one is for the shift over or gradual process a little slower. (he laughs) So, you see, it isn't that they are both after the same thing. One wants to go a little faster than the other, and well, things will be worked out, of course.

Q Mr. Knudsen said, sir, in his press conference yesterday -- day before yesterday -- two Executive Orders were on your desk which he said would clarify the situation. I checked with somebody in Henderson's office and they said they didn't know that they had been proposed.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, again background. I suppose people have got half a dozen different Executive Orders in draft form -- just tentative and none of them are satisfactory. They are being worked on. Meanwhile the work is going on pretty well. That is the main thing.

Q There will be a reorganization more or less though?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't call it a reorganization, because that sounds as if it is from the top down. It's a working out of something so far down the line that it doesn't affect general organization.

Q Do you think, sir, that the American public is aware of the international situation in the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: No, any more than they are sufficiently aware of the international situation in the West.

But, and this again is background, I have got yesterday certain reports from people who have been out around the country -- er -- one or two of them -- one -- one newspaperman and two magazine writers -- one Member of the Cabinet -- and a couple of other people, and they had been out previously in March or April -- clear across to the coast.

Er -- it so happened all these reports came in the same day, and they all agreed that there has been a tremendous change since March or April. The people are far more cognizant of the international danger, and the world situation, than they were in March or April, and increasingly so. I don't think they are sufficiently aware yet, but there has been a very marked change in three months.

Q What -- what might be done to sharpen their awareness?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what I said just before -- if you want one example out of a dozen -- LaGuardia's Committee came in yesterday, on --- what was the name of the Committee?

Q Volunteer Participation Committee.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. That is one of the things I said to them. I think that is the one I edited. (laughter) Of course, those people, as you know, they will be -- there are five from each corps area. That means that they will have in each corps area literally hundreds of committees under them. That is why I emphasized getting it to every community and every home. (adding) And to the unfortunate people who don't have homes.

Q Would you say, sir, that the events in the Far East have sharply accentuated the dangers of the international situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I put it this way. Put it -- the events in the Far East are bringing a greater awareness on the part of the public to the dangers of the world situation.

Q Mr. President, on account of the world situation, do you expect to come back here occasionally, like you are doing now?

THE PRESIDENT: Whenever I can get off.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Except that I would very much like to get a little sea air sometime this summer, and that is rather difficult these days.

Q I would like to have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) How about that Tom? (Mr. Tom Reynolds)

MR. REYNOLDS: I am in favor of it, sir.

Q Sea water?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Sea water?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, not chlorinated water. (laughter)

MR. REYNOLDS: As the founder of the 'Forty Fathom Club', I am in favor of it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter) Anybody that can fall into the Pacific Ocean -- of all oceans in the world -- and have the Ocean rise --- (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President, did you hear about Fred Pasley's test of the chlorinated water?

THE PRESIDENT: What is it Fred?

MR. FRED PASLEY: Some of the boys took a bath in it, Mr. President. (laughter)

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Anything happening in Poughkeepsie?

Q We haven't had time, sir.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Nothing startling. The political situation is coming along.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it? Is it? (laughter)

MR. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Shipman gave me an interesting report on the Library.

I haven't had a chance to talk to him. I don't know how the attendance is.

Q Seven thousand.

THE PRESIDENT: Have they worn out the grass yet?

Q No, they have been pretty orderly.

THE PRESIDENT: Have they stolen any of my corn?

Q They haven't got through any of the cornfield. We will keep them out.

MR. F. PASLEY: Good-bye, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good-bye, Fred.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #759,
Executive Offices of the President,
July 29, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you have a good time, John?

MR. JOHN HENRY: Pretty well. Good copy.

THE PRESIDENT: We avoided some heat here.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. Why did you come home?

THE PRESIDENT: You are looking a little pale.

MR. GODWIN: Terrific.

MR. JOHN HENRY: They had a good party in Philadelphia, too. And was that
a party! It ended in a tie. (relating to a singing contest party
with George O'Connor singing bar-room ballads)

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh, and even after my telegram. (he laughs)

MR. JOHN HENRY: They said they will have to fight it over again. They
are going to.

THE PRESIDENT: Why don't they pick a Christian spot to pull it off on?
That Watergate, where they have the musical festivals, that would be
all right.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

MR. JOHN HENRY: All they are waiting for is somebody to pay the check.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

I don't know what anybody's coming in today for. There isn't
any news.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: No news. Haven't you got anything, Earl? (Mr. Godwin)

MR. GODWIN: Have I anything?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Any news?

MR. GODWIN: I was just going to ask ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, go ahead.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- What do you think of Mr. Churchill's statement that the United States is on the verge of war?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't read it.

MR. GODWIN: If you had read it?

THE PRESIDENT: If I had read it? (he laughs)

Q What was your answer, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: That I hadn't read it.

Q That's what he said, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That's what he did say.

THE PRESIDENT: That I hadn't read it. Try another one. I am afraid -- I am afraid this heat's got you people here in Washington. It's bad.

Q Mr. President, could you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Up in Hyde Park we had a grand time -- lots of news and nice cool weather. Haven't any of you got any questions for me? Did you say "Thank you, Mr. President" Earl? (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: No. I will ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, could you tell us anything about this price control?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Price controls?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- no. Nothing on that. I was thinking about priorities. They go up tomorrow.

MR. GODWIN: Price control?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The priorities.

Q Priorities go up tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Wait a minute -- I have got them mixed up. Henderson has been working on the actual ---

Q (interposing) Price control?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Are you familiar with the other issue of asking -- answering questions on farm products. Is that taken care of?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not sufficiently familiar. Of course, Leon is bringing in the things here, late this afternoon or tonight. The Message isn't even written.

Q Mr. President, can you discuss export control in relation to the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on it.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) In that connection, are the prices being eased up on Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on it.

Q Or any news on the priorities Executive Order?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not yet. I haven't been back long enough.

Q Mr. President, has there been any naval action since the statement discussed by Secretary Knox?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of.

[David I. Walsh?]

Q Mr. President, yesterday Chairman Wallace of the Senate Naval Affairs Committee -- er -- said that Richard Wheeler, the son of the Senator, after he had passed the examinations for a commission, had been told by an admiral that "The Navy has no use for you," -- after he had said that he agreed with his father's opinions on foreign policy. Now, in your opinion as Commander-in-Chief, is the loyalty of anybody suspected of treason -- suspected because of that?

Feb 10-11-56

THE PRESIDENT: Obviously, the question is entirely improper, the way you have put it. Obviously, I would refer you to the Secretary of the Navy, because I know absolutely nothing about it, except what I read in the newspapers.

Q I meant as a general policy, sir. Would agreement with the isolationist or non-interventionist standpoint bring any question ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) As I know nothing about that, how can I answer the question? That is equally clear.

(pause here)

Q Mr. President, would you care to make any comment on the Japanese expansion into French Indo-China?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can. It still is a very current matter.

That is the easiest way of putting it. I guess probably at the present time we had better not say anything.

Q I wonder whether you saw any difference in the Vichy government's action, in connection with Indo-China than in connection with Syria, in view of the fact that they were eager to defend Syria?

THE PRESIDENT: That is pretty hard to answer that.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. Presi---

Q (interposing) Mr. President -- Mr. President, about two months ago the publication of oil figures was suppressed, at the request of the State Department. There have been reports that there still have been some fairly heavy oil shipments from California to Japan. In view of your remarks the other day, could you say whether there has been an attempt to curtail them? Is that the reason for withholding those figures?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what the reason was. I didn't even know they had been withheld.

Q About two months since they have been issued.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, it's a fact that up to a very few days there were ships going out with oil. I know that.

Q Mr. President, do the rumors concerning Secretary Stimson's resignation have any foundation in fact?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The usual answer.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. (gets up)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) The Attorney Generalship -- are you near a decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything at all about any proposed plans to correlate the power program under Secretary Ickes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the whole thing is being studied. I don't know that there will be anything on it for -- oh what? -- three weeks.

Q Mr. President, I wonder if you could outline something for us in regard to oil shipments to Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing. Best not to discuss that at the present time.

Q Mr. President, so far as you know now, do you expect to sign the flood control bill passed yesterday by the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The flood control bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen it. Does it include only the defense projects, or is it ---

Q (interjecting) No.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Or does it include authorizations for others?

Q It includes authorizations for others.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, as you know, on the general subject of authorizations in the -- the thought is that the things which are not connected with defense matters will be merely authorized but not appropriated for, and that appropriations would only obtain for those that are essential to national defense. In other words, the build-up of the back log or projects to be used at the end of the emergency.

Q Well, the biggest item from it is the \$45,000,000. on the Allegheny Reservoir at the head of the Allegheny River, and the one thing it would produce is power -- power for defense.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether that was called on the defense project or not.

Q Mr. President, may we ask you for some background? The -- the -- power is one of the most important items in our national defense program at the present time. We ask you to give us just a little bit of background and knowledge regarding what we are up against, so far as power is concerned.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't give you the details because I don't know. It depends a little bit on the location in the country. Some parts of the country you have got enough power; other parts of the country ^{not} you have/got enough power. There are two -- there are three ways of building up the deficiencies in those parts that need more power. One is by certain plants, that is, coal and oil; another by additional water power, especially if it can be quickly built -- like putting in your turbine for instance, on the Columbia River. That is an example of where you have the dam, and what you have to do is put your additional turbine into the dam. And the third thing relates to the con-

necting up of the various transmission lines to bring power from nearby regions that -- where there is not a shortage, and all of those three being tied in together by the Federal Power Commission and other agencies that are connected in regard to needs -- like, for instance, O.P.M. O.P.M. will tell the Federal Power Commission where they think there is going to be a future shortage of power. I don't know that there's anything else.

Q Can you tell us, sir, about the Olds plan that was submitted to you?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because part of it is in effect, and part of it on organizational matters is being studied. There are certain financial aspects relating to -- it's an old subject called 'holding companies' which is related to providing the money. Er -- there would probably have to be some modifications of that, which is more complicated than the holding company situation. Things of that kind are still under study.

Q Mr. President, last week, after talking to you, Governor Maybank of South Carolina announced that you had approved two projects in South Carolina -- large oil properties known as Clark's Hill and Lyles Ford Project. Do you know how they are to be taken and by what agencies?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. One of them, the Clark's Hill Project has been approved for quite a long time.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: For authorizations.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet been authorized, I think.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: And that probably would be done by Army engineers. But it

is the headwaters of the Savannah River that the Army has been handling, all the way up as far as Augusta, and the other one is a part of the big South Carolina project. And that again -- I don't know who would run that, but I imagine the South Carolina authority that is building the main project.

Q Mr. President, Senator Clark of Idaho was quoted today as saying that our good neighbor policy was defeated here, and he believed he should take over control of all Latin America and Canada. Do you have any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I read that in the afternoon papers, and I think that -- all I can say is, I hope that none of our friends in South America or Canada will take that seriously.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. President, now we have got by the most important national problems, I would like to go on to New York State, if I may. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Come with me next time. (more laughter)

Q Er -- there has been some suggestion in the House Rivers and Harbors Committee that because of the Appalachian case, the St. Lawrence power belongs to the Federal Government, and not New York State, and that there might be a suggestion of producing a modified T.V.A. organization up there, instead of the local power authority.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me talk to you -- almost off the record. I guess you can use it as background. I find myself in one perfectly terrible position about that.

When I was Governor of New York, in order to get something done, I tried to get the previous administration to further the thing. They wouldn't do it, except at the expense of turning over the power, in

some way, to the Niagara and Hudson Power Company. In order to block it, and in order to get something done, I took the legal position -- which was perfectly correct -- that the bed of the St. Lawrence river half-way out is in the State of New York. In other words, I was fighting for cheap power, and was being blocked by the Federal administration.

And then I come down here, and in a very short space of time the shoe goes on the other foot. And I am in a sense precluded from saying that the State of New York hasn't got title to the bed of the river half-way out, by what I said for four years as Governor. Er -- however, we are getting on extremely well on it, and are working out with the State of New York -- after this legislation goes through -- some modus operandi, by which the question of title will not arise in any way. In other words, we are taking it as what it is -- a national emergency -- necessity, and treating the construction of the dam -- power -- as a necessary project for defense, in such a way that rights -- the ultimate rights of the State of New York would be fully guarded. I haven't got things worked out yet. The first thing is to get the legislation. I expect no trouble at all, though, with the State of New York.

Q Mr. President, may I ask one more international question? I wondered if you considered the Japanese situation at the present time as more serious, from the point of view of this country's interest, than the European situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think that that is -- if you don't mind my saying so -- I don't think that a question like that means anything relatively.

Q I wondered whether the situation out there is the more serious as it affects this country's interest at the moment.

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't put it on a comparative basis. I don't think
along those lines.

MR. GODWIN: (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You got your way, Earl. (Mr. Godwin)

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #760,
Executive Offices of the President,
August 1, 1941 -- 11.00 A.M., E.S.T.

MR. D. CORNELL: Would you still like to get some of that sea air?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

MR. D. CORNELL: Would you still like to get some of that sea air?

THE PRESIDENT: You bet.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) tells me I have nothing at all.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether you have had any word from Mr.

Hopkins since he arrived in Moscow?

THE PRESIDENT: Only a report of his arrival. That's all.

Q Er -- could you tell us whether there is any possibility of him coming

back by way of China?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't the faintest idea.

Q Would you care to comment, sir, on the Russian resistance up to the
present time?

THE PRESIDENT: I think only -- only in this way: that it is magnificent,
and frankly, better than any military expert in Germany thought it
would be. (laughter)

Q Could we quote that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q A direct quote, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, if you want to.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Does that include outstanding German military experts?

THE PRESIDENT: Now don't go and spoil it. (laughter)

Q Thank you.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: May we take it that means the Germans have done some
tall lying? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether -- how Mr. Hopkins got to Moscow?

THE PRESIDENT: On his own two feet. (laughter)

Q Could you say that he went in an American machine?

THE PRESIDENT: Machine? Machine? I haven't -- I didn't say anything about
a machine. I said his own two feet.

Q Airplane?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It's like the movement of ships and the movement of planes
these days. It's much better not to talk about methods. That is for
human safety.

Q Anything new in the Far East, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. I haven't seen the dispatches this
morning, but I guess I would have been told if there was anything.

Q Mr. President, there is a definite impression that July marked a very
definite turn in the war.

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

Q That July was definitely -- marked a very definite turn in the war, with
Russian resistance up much more. Would you care to comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, does the new Economic Board that was set up yesterday
have anything to do with the domestic defense plan, or what?

THE PRESIDENT: No; foreign.

Q Mr. President, do you have any immediate travel plans?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, my hope is -- I remember about ten days ago hope was
springing, and it is a little bit more hopeful now. I really do hope

I can get off early next week up the coast somewhere, where at least the nights will be cool. And -- er -- I think I will take a week off.

Q Does that mean, Mr. President, that the international situation ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, of course, I am always ready to go back ---

Q (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- on twenty-four hours notice.

Q Can you say how far up the coast you are going?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q Would it be as far as Canada?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether you call Campobello Canada or not. My mother's up there. It is actually in New Brunswick, you know, about a mile.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, what progress is being made on the second lend-lease appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: On the what?

MR. P. BRANDT: Second lend-lease appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there will be anything, Pete, on that, until Harry Hopkins gets back.

MR. P. BRANDT: You mean, sir -- in other words, that it may include large amounts for Russian aid?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there will be any determination made until he gets back.

Q Mr. President, on this entire matter the general understanding has been that Russia has not -- did not come under the lend-lease bill.

THE PRESIDENT: That is correct.

Q Does that cover the future as well as the present?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I am not a guesser, but it certainly hasn't, and I see no check on buying things.

Q Mr. President, could you give us a picture on the Attorney Generalship?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the armistice announced last night between Ecuador and Peru?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that it is extremely satisfactory that the fighting has -- has ceased, and that I have very definite hopes that this boundary dispute, which as you know has been in existence for a good many years, will be settled peacefully, even if it takes some time.

Q Mr. President, do you have any plans to form a black-list of Japanese firms, similar to the Germans?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q It was printed that you did.

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it.

Q Mr. President, is there any particular reason why Russia should not come under the terms of the Lend-Lease Act?

THE PRESIDENT: They are able to pay.

Q Yes.

Q Is Russia excluded by the terms of the Act?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Russia is not included by the terms of the Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea. They are able to pay, and that is the only thing that is before the House.

Q Mr. President, is there any possibility of lend-lease aid to the Free French forces?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard about it.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Mr. President -- can you tell us anything about oil shipments to Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You will have to find out from the Treasury or State.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #761,
Held on Board U.S.S. POTOMAC
at Rockland, Maine,
August 16, 1941, 3:15 P.M., E.D.T.

THE PRESIDENT: I am glad to see you. How are you?

PRESS: Very well, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, all of you got here all right.

PRESS: The question was whether we would get here -- the stories you carried. Did you bring back any distinguished guests?

THE PRESIDENT: Look at that over there in the corner. There are a lot of local boys here. What are they, fishermen? Sit down over here, (M.C. Hennesy, Boston Globe) [M.E. Hennesy?] Mike, and keep me straight. You kept me straight for about 50 years.

PRESS: (Mr. M.C. Hennesy) Fifty-two, to be exact.

THE PRESIDENT: Mike says he hasn't got any news.

PRESS: Have you, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Awfully glad to have you see the cabin of the POTOMAC.

There is a gentleman over here behind Mike, Harry Hopkins, just back from Moscow. There he is.

PRESS: Could you tell us where this conference with Mr. Churchill was held?

THE PRESIDENT: I cannot, for obvious reasons. I had better make one or two things clear in the beginning. Names of ships are out. I suppose it has been published. The Prime Minister was there on the PRINCE OF WALES and I was there on the AUGUSTA, but outside of that, nothing about ships, nothing about times, dates, and nothing about locations. All those things for perfectly obvious reasons, which I don't have to explain. Just for example, I wanted to slay a gentleman that said I was coming to Rockland today, because it's merely an invitation.

ACB 10-16-56

Things of that kind cause trouble, if you make known the exact location on the high seas of the President and the Prime Minister. However, it was foggy between North Haven and Rockland, and while it's open season out there, no submarine fired a torpedo at us as far as we could see, and we are here safely.

You want to know certain things, I suppose. The easiest thing to do is to give you what we might call the impressions that stand out. I think the first thing in the minds of all of us was a very remarkable religious service on the quarterdeck of the PRINCE OF WALES last Sunday morning. There was their own ship's complement, with three or four hundred bluejackets and marines from American ships, on the quarterdeck, completely intermingled, first one uniform and then another uniform. The service was conducted by two chaplains, one English and one American, and as usual, the lesson was read by the captain of the British ship. They had three hymns that everybody took part in, and a little ship's altar was decked with the American flag and the British flag. The officers were all intermingled on the fantail, and I think the pictures of it have been released. I am not sure. The point is, I think everybody there, officers and enlisted men, felt that it was one of the great historic services. I know I did.

PRESS: That was on the AUGUSTA?

THE PRESIDENT: No, on the PRINCE OF WALES. Conferences were held between -- you know who was with me, there is no reason why that shouldn't come out now: The Chief of Staff, General Marshall; Chief of Air Corps, General Arnold; General Burns, he is in charge of the Lease-Lend program; and Colonel Bundy of the Army.

PRESS: Who is he, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I think he is War Plans, Army War Plans.

PRESS: Do you know his initials?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I don't. Then from the Navy: Admiral Stark, Admiral King, Commander-in-Chief, Atlantic Fleet; Admiral Turner, of the War Plans Section, Navy Department; Captain Sherman, Operations; and then, of course, my own staff, General Watson, Admiral McIntire and Captain Beardall. And two civilians, Mr. Hopkins and myself.

PRESS: Your two sons?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that was just pure luck. Happened to catch them after we got there.

PRESS: Mr. Elliot and Franklin, Jr.?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Also Mr. Harriman, and Mr. Welles from the State Department.

PRESS: Jimmie Forrestal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. And the British, of course, had what might be called "opposite numbers" in practically every case in that list that I have mentioned. The conferences were held between the opposite numbers in groups, but they were held partly on the AUGUSTA and partly on the PRINCE OF WALES. Actually the conferences between the Prime Minister and me were all held, except one, on the AUGUSTA. It was a little bit difficult for me in getting over on the PRINCE OF WALES.

PRESS: How long was Mr. Churchill actually with you?

THE PRESIDENT: That I can't tell you for obvious reasons.

PRESS: May we assume more than a day?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't assume.

PRESS: Can you tell us the genesis of the whole plan, who originated it?

THE PRESIDENT: Al, the thing has been talked about since last February, and would have taken place a good deal earlier, had it not been for the campaign in Greece, and the campaign in Crete. You might say it was somewhat delayed, about three months, over the original intention.

PRESS: Was it your idea, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say it was our joint idea.

PRESS: Mr. President, the announcements after the conference spoke of peace aims. The conferences themselves seemed to be conferences of possible procedure in defense of ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think that is a bit of a narrow way of looking at things. Put it this way: that the conferences was primarily an interchange of views relating to the present and the future -- a swapping of information, which was eminently successful.

I think one of the subjects which perhaps all overlooked, both in the statements and comments, was the need for an exchange of what might be called views relating to what is happening to the world under the Nazi regime, as applied to other nations. The more that is discussed and looked into, the more terrible the thought becomes of having the world as a whole dominated by the kind of influences which have been at work in the occupied or affiliated nations. It's a thing that needs to be brought home to all of the Democracies, more and more.

PRESS: Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the actual implementation of those broad declarations, now?

THE PRESIDENT: Interchange of views, that's all. Nothing else.

PRESS: We might assume that you have complete understanding with Mr.

Churchill on all aspects of the world situation, including the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: When you come down to localities, I don't suppose there is a

single section or a single continent that was not discussed at one time or another, in all the conferences you ever heard of.

PRESS: Are we any closer to entering the war, actually?

THE PRESIDENT: I should say, no.

PRESS: May we quote directly?

THE PRESIDENT: No, you can quote indirectly.

PRESS: Mr. President, is Russia bound to subscribe to this eight point program?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

PRESS: Will she be?

THE PRESIDENT: Nobody ever suggested it until you did.

PRESS: Can you tell us anything about aid to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: You know just as much about it as I do, or Mr. Churchill, for discussion. Last year two commentators entirely overlooked two factors -- one was geography, and the other was goods and munitions.

We did discuss the fitting in of Russian needs to the existing production program, and we also discussed what might be called the fact that the Russian needs might be divided into two categories. The first is material which is immediately available, to get there during this summer's campaign, and on the assumption that winter will bring at least a partial halt to campaigns in Russia. The other part is the materials and munitions which can be got to Russia by the time the spring campaign opens, and the fitting in of all of that to our own domestic needs and other Lease-Lend orders.

PRESS: You have no doubt the Russian resistance will continue into winter?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess from that there is a sort of an assumption in there.

PRESS: Mr. President, do you plan to go on the radio or deliver any message to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: That depends largely on you fellows.

PRESS: How so, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: If you give the country an exceedingly correct picture, I probably won't go on the radio.

PRESS: You can rely on us, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose you won't print that.

PRESS: That's what he thinks.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's all the news. I have to get back to Washington tomorrow.

PRESS: (interposing) May I ask you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I have no plans.

PRESS: May I ask whether another Lend-Lease appropriation is in sight?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer is just what it has been for the last month. We are still studying it. And regarding the place where we will ask for more money, there is a certain amount of the present fund which we cannot allocate at this particular time. Certain sums have been set aside by act of Congress for things like food, and of course food supplies don't have to be -- like wheat for instance -- don't have to be manufactured months ahead of time. A certain amount of money is being withheld from the first Lend-Lease appropriation to take care of agricultural needs during the next few months. We haven't got up any list of things. They have been working on it.

PRESS: Mr. President, will Russia get Lease-Lend aid now?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

PRESS: Is that because she has the cash to pay?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the same thing.

PRESS: Has Mr. Churchill any idea of coming to the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: Not that I know of. Neither have I any intention of going to Britain, for a while, anyway.

PRESS: Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the French situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not fully up on it. Only had telegraphic reports. I will see Mr. Hull tomorrow very shortly after we get in.

PRESS: Far East, too?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing -- Far East.

PRESS: Mr. President, maybe I shouldn't bring this up, but we are confronted with difficulties about train departure if we leave at four o'clock. Is there any possibility the train could be held for a time?

THE PRESIDENT: Bill, how about it, hold it for a while?

MR. HASSETT: Could give them a half hour.

PRESS: One thing, Mr. President, were any steps taken to document this meeting for history, from the American point of view?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to talk off the record -- not for use, literally, not for use. There is no reason why you fellows shouldn't know. The reason I can't use it is that it would be discourteous. The whole point of the original arrangement was, as you know, secrecy, for perfectly obvious naval reasons, and I didn't take you three fellows or anybody else. Neither did I take any cameramen. But when we got there we found that there was a moving picture man who goes around with Mr. Churchill, and he says he is very different from ours. Mr. Churchill travels with no newspapermen whatsoever, but he does travel with a regular Ministry of Information motion picture man, which is the regular British custom, and I think he is a Government employee and not a press association, and nearly all the moving pictures that you see of

Mr. Churchill were taken by Government men and then given to the press. We found that he had this man who customarily travels with him, and I was able to find, from Navy personnel, one or two people who took some pictures which were sent down to Steve and have been released.

On the question of writing, why I never assumed for a minute that there would be an official historian, and the Ministry of Information in England, at the last minute, had sent two gentlemen who they insisted were not newspapermen, they were people who wrote books. I said, "Good God, I've got a whole lot of people who are not only newspapermen, but have written books too!" If I had known, I would have done it too. So they are two gentlemen who were literary gentlemen. They were told very definitely by me, and they acceded to it, if these two literary gentlemen ever wrote anything over there inside of a year, about this conference, that they were to give it to the three American press associations, in London, free of charge. That was about the best I could do. If they do write anything, the three press associations will get their stuff. That is the agreement, whether they are going to write for publication or British Naval Archives. I have protected you as best I could, having been taken by surprise.

I think on the three press associations, there is no particular reason why you shouldn't let your London offices know that you are aware of the fact that there were two literary gentlemen who were put on board by the British Ministry of Information, and that they have agreed with me that any release from the pens of either of those gentlemen goes to our three press associations. I couldn't think of any better way to cover it. I can't say, "Mea culpa," because it was the other fellow's "culpa."

PRESS: May the three press associations leave here first?

THE PRESIDENT: Bill?

HASSETT: O. K.

(This Press Conference reported by Francis Terry, Navy
Department)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #762,
Executive Offices of the President,
August 19, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

MR. GODWIN: (to the President) How do you do? (The President waves his hand)

THE PRESIDENT: Have you recovered?

MR. GODWIN: What?

Q Nothing to recover from.

(pause here)

Q We inspected the new Cabinet table this afternoon.

THE PRESIDENT: Very nice. We may be able to see everybody now.

Q There are rumors that Jesse Jones (Secretary of Commerce) made it in the basement of the Commerce Department himself, at night. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. What did he ever do with that aquarium -- swimming pool was it? -- no, aquarium. What did he ever do with it?

Q Still down there.

MR. GODWIN: Still down there.

THE PRESIDENT: He should turn it into a swimming pool.

MR. GODWIN: Not for humans.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a pity.

(pause here)

THE PRESIDENT: Get rid of that! (throwing away some newspapers)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what's been happening here in the last couple of weeks? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Surmises.

THE PRESIDENT: (punning) Sir who?

MR. GODWIN: Surmises. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about the Japanese situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There's no news. No further news today.

Q We understood that a message from Ambassador Grew was coming in on the tape at the State Department. I wonder if anything had come over yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Could you tell us whether any further steps are being taken to bring home those one hundred Americans?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You would have to ask the Secretary. Not that I know of.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your conference with Lord Beaverbrook?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about the general problems of need and supply.

And I told him that I had asked, before I left -- oh, about three weeks ago -- er -- our own Army and Navy to make another -- er -- survey of actual production deliveries -- needs and deliveries -- not only through 1942 but also for 1943, and that I would be very glad if the British would do the same thing. We probably will have the -- certain Chinese needs and certain Russian needs.

In other words, try to get, as of this time -- late summer -- in 1941 -- a new -- a new picture going further into the future than we have gone up to the present time. We had a survey, of course, of that kind -- er -- about a year ago, and -- er -- it's time that we had a -- a new picture, a year having gone by. And the British will give us their figures pretty soon, and I will get our own figures pretty soon. Then we will put the whole thing together and draw a line and add it up.

Q The final military part on production and needs?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The final military part on production and needs?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Oh, yes.

Q Mr. President, does that assume that this war is going to go through 1943?

THE PRESIDENT: If necessary.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, would you care to take up with your Press Conference anything in connection with your high-seas conference. In other words ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think there is ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) You must have seen or heard of reports. Is there anything that you care to clarify?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. If you will -- I don't think it is necessary for me to go into any criticism such as I think Alben Barkley is making this afternoon on the Senate floor -- in regard to certain newspaper articles. That is neither here nor there, but on the whole I do want to say this: that the whole -- the whole idea of my getting away without telling you people about it was, from my point of view, based on the security and safety of the Prime Minister and his staff; and the joke was that his consideration of secrecy was based on his conception of the safety of the President of the United States and his staff. (laughter) And you might say that between the two there was agreement that it should be kept secret.

And there were a great many reasons why the press should put two and two together, on the ground of the absence of certain people from their usual haunts. And I of course have not the slightest objection

to stories that were based on -- er -- guesses and -- er -- implications that something was happening, because these people were away, because those guesses were all stated in the press that they were guesses. There wasn't any assertion, except one or two radio commentators that I happened to hear. There was no assertion -- er -- that either the Prime Minister or I had definitely gone to a certain place.

There were surmises. Well, surmises are perfectly legitimate if they are labeled surmises. I think that the press ought to be congratulated on the restraint that they showed during that blackout week -- er -- in using only -- er -- the surmises, and nothing else. On the whole -- the whole thing was very well kept. And of course there was a great difficulty afterwards in keeping certain details as to location and times, and so forth, until the British Prime Minister could get home.

Well, now, he is safely home, so the thing is all right, except that I think it was generally agreed that the actual timing, and the actual location, should not be given out until a good while later, possibly the end of the war, for the reason that there are so many -- what shall I say? -- scientific considerations to be taken into consideration -- er -- radio signals, just for example. It is better not to give information which would be of advantage to the Axis powers.

Q Mr. President, were the accounts of your meeting with the Prime Minister correct enough to foreclose the necessity of your going on the air to explain it to the American people?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think it is necessary to go on the air. I think the accounts are pretty good from here. There were one or two highly

imaginative accounts that I read out of London, but I think the general public realizes that they were imaginative.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, I think a great many people have the idea that the war -- as carried on between nations at war -- on our side -- will be -- there will be more to it -- more punch to it -- more actively engaged. Is that a good surmise?

THE PRESIDENT: Help for the Democracies of the world, yes.

Q As a result of this conference, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, it clarified many, many things. It discussed operations. As I said the other day, in practically every section of the whole world -- and -- er -- it has -- it's brought a -- what shall I say? -- a better meeting of the minds on needs, and the fight that the Democracies are putting up against Nazi-ism.

Q Mr. President, what high officials are going to Moscow?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea. We haven't talked about it.

Q Mr. President, can you bring us up to date on the Federal Shipbuilding strike?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They are talking this afternoon, and I haven't had any reply.

THE PRESIDENT: Who is 'they', Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Mr. Korn -- ?

VOICE: Korndorff. (L. H. Korndorff, President of the Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock Company, Kearny, N. J.)

THE PRESIDENT: And Mr. Green. (John Green, President of the C.I.O. Shipbuilders Union)

Q Mr. President, there is one published report that Secretary -- Vice President Wallace is going to head the new defense setup.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Pure invention. That's all.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, could you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Not on the Vice President's part -- (laughter) -- or any responsible person on the Hill. I happen to know -- not anyone here.

MR. GODWIN: Along with the invention, it came a pretty well built-up story of streamlining the office of defense -- more efficiency, and so forth, as if there would be a reorganization ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, no. Not reorganization, or anything like that. We are conducting, as you know, daily -- have been for what? -- a year -- studies, for the ironing out and smoothing over of new difficulties as they arise.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether the Prime Minister seemed confident that Britain can win the war, without our entry?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that that kind of a question is a useful kind of a question, because it is too -- it is too 'headliney', without any substance to it. You know what I mean. I can tell you, off the record, what the answer is, but I think it would be a great mistake to quote me as quoting Winston Churchill that they are going to win the war.

Off the record, I can say: Yes -- that he is extremely confident, in the long run -- in the very long pull. But at the same time -- mind you this is off the record -- at the same time, both he and I did talk over -- er -- a tendency in -- that goes with Democracies for the population as a whole -- the peoples that make up Democracy -- to be on the crest of the wave one minute, and in the depths of despair the next minute. It comes from our type of civilization. You don't

find that in -- er -- dictatorship countries, where individual thinking is almost entirely eliminated, by decree.

As an example, there was, as we all know, one reason for this vote the other day -- mind you this is all of the record -- (he laughs) -- there was -- er -- there had been a feeling growing actually, because Russia had done a lot better than anybody expected, not only the press but the generals. (laughter) And there was general 'hooray boy' stuff that Russia was doing so much better than expected. Thereupon, everybody in the lightness of their hearts under the Democratic system said: "Oh, isn't that perfectly grand! Now let us -- let us slow up a bit. Everything is going to be all right. Russia is going to come through."

Now of course that is a terribly, terribly dangerous tendency. And there was a little of that feeling, I think, over in England itself -- as much as to say: "This thing is all right now."

And of course that can't be justified, if you know all the facts. On the contrary, when you're winning, or when you're -- things look a little bit better, that's the time for you to redouble your efforts. If you think the thing through, there is a chance to redouble your efforts and go a little bit faster.

And -- I wonder if I have got it -- I have got an interesting thing -- you might like to use it. See if I can find it. (looks through the papers in his workbasket) It's a thing I dug out of Carl Sandburg's Lincoln (The War Years) the other day, something he said to some ladies who came in to see him at the end of the first year of the war, in 1862. If you will bear with me for a minute, I will try to find this. (still looking) Here it is.

This is Sandburg's Volume One. 1862. Statement of Lincoln --

I will get Steve to have this for you, if you want it. I will just read it to you.

MR. EARLY: On the record now?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this is on the record. (reading)

"1862 -- to Mrs. A. Livermore, Chicago. 'I have no word of encouragement to give!' was the slow, blunt reply. 'The military situation is far from bright; and the country knows it as well as I do.'

"The women were silent. They knew it was a heart-to-heart talk, that he was telling them what he could not well tell the country, that he was frankly relieving the burden of an over-weighted mind. It was a silence of a moment, but 'deep and painful', said Mrs. Livermore.

"The President went on: 'The fact is the people have not yet made up their minds that we are at war with the South.' -- mind you, this is a whole year later -- 'They have not buckled down to the determination to fight this war through; for they have got the idea into their heads that we are going to get out of this fix somehow by strategy! That's the word -- STRATEGY! General McClellan thinks he is going to whip the Rebels by strategy; and the army has got the same notion. They have no idea that the War is to be carried on and put through by hard, tough fighting, and that it will hurt somebody; and no headway is going to be made while this delusion lasts.'"

That is rather an interesting parallel. Lincoln's belief that this country hadn't yet waked up to the fact that they had a war to win, and Lincoln saw what had been going on. Well, there are quite a lot of things for us to think about in this -- in this day and age.

Q Mr. President, would that very narrow vote on the Draft bill indicate that perhaps there are others who hadn't waked up to the war?

THE PRESIDENT: I think there are a lot of people who haven't waked up to the -- the danger. A great many people.

Q Mr. President, if you were going ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q Mr. President, if you were going to write a lead on that, how would you

do it? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I'd say, "President Quotes Lincoln" -- (laughter) -- "And
Draws Parallel."

Q May we quote that, sir?

MR. GODWIN: Will that ---

Q (interposing) You mean there is a parallel situation in this country ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q (continuing) --- in the world today?

Q Including this country?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, sure.

Q Mr. President, if we could get back from Lincoln to the defense setup --
(laughter) -- I wonder if you could tell us a little more about Judge
Rosenman's job in drawing up this new plan?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not drawing up any new plan. Just making studies.
Just part of a continuing study business.

I will read you something else which will be good for your souls.

(he laughs) This is a letter I got this morning from an old friend
of mine: (reading)

"Inevitably, constant misuse can rob some phrases of their noble
meaning. Therefore, regard for truth compels one to say that
somewhere in the Atlantic you did make some history, and like
all historic events, it was not what was said or done that de-
fined the scope of the achievement. It is the forces, the
impalpable, the spiritual forces, the hopes, the expressions,
and the dreams, and the endeavors that are released. That's
what matters. And so all that is implied is the fact that you
and Churchill met in the circumstances under which you did.

"The aims for which you met, that is the vital achievement
from all -- from which all else will flow. We live by symbols and
we can't too often recall them. And you two in that ocean, freed
from all the tawdry accompaniment of cheap journalism" --

(laughter) -- I told you this is good for your souls -- some of you,

I mean --

"--in the setting of that Sunday service, gave meaning to the conflict between civilization and arrogant, brute challenge; and gave promise more powerful and binding than any formal treaty could, that civilization has brains and resources that tyranny will not be able to overcome.

"All this talk of press and picture releases, and what not, are the merest trivia."

That's what I was coming down to -- "the merest trivia." Now that applies, in the last analysis, to whether so and so's going into O.P.M., or somebody's going into O.P.A.C.S. That's trivia. There are so many bigger things, and the more we can get away from the trivia, in trying to get out of this great world danger, the better it will be. (continuing reading)

"The deed and the spirit and the invigoration breathed there in the hearts of men will endure and will kindle actions toward the goal of ridding the world of this horror."

So much for the trivia.

Q Who was that, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: A friend. (loud laughter)

Q Mr. President, who is going to determine what is trivia?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Who is going to determine what is trivia?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, you fellows. Who else?

MR. GODWIN: There is a great deal of it gotten out.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Perfectly true.

Q Mr. President, here is a real, trivial question. Can you say anything about the new War Department building in Arlington? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is of interest to not only the Washington papers.

I think it ought to be of interest to everybody. I haven't got the bill yet. And I have talked with Director of the Budget about it, and I have had a number of memoranda, a number of pleas on one side. And

tomorrow I am going to see General Somervell, (Brehon B. Somervell) to hear the story on the other side.

My present inclination is not to accept that action by the Congress. I don't say it is the final -- er -- decision, because I haven't heard the other side yet, but there are some of you that I told over a year ago an old story to.

When I first came down here in 1933, I said I didn't think I would ever be let into the Gates of Heaven, because I had been responsible for desecrating the parks of Washington. Back in the fall of 1917, the Navy Department needed space, and I took up with President Wilson the possibility of building a temporary building -- wooden building -- down here on the Oval. And he said, "Why do you select that site?" I said, "Mr. President, because it would be so unsightly right here in front of the White House, that it just would have to be taken down at the end of the war." "Well," he said, "I don't think I could stand all that hammering and sawing right under my front windows." He said, "Can't you put it somewhere else?" So I said, "Of course. Put it down in Potomac Park." "Well," he said, "Put it down there and we will get rid of it."

And then came up the question -- that located it in the park -- then came up the question of the dangers of a wooden building. And the President decided it should be a fireproof building; and I got hold of the Turner Construction Company, and they did a perfectly amazing job, as you know. Well, that was finished in the Spring of 1918. That is 23 years ago, and the building is just as solid as the day it was built. There was nothing temporary about it; and then it was so good that we went ahead and put the Munitions Building right alongside.

It was a crime -- I don't hesitate to say so -- it was a crime, for which I should be kept out of Heaven, for having desecrated the whole plan of, I think, the loveliest city in the world -- the Capital of the United States. Now, a part of that plan, of course, as it developed over the years, created the great National Cemetery. Er -- General Lee's old place. And Arlington is known and loved throughout the length and breadth of the land.

The whole scheme of things was that people on this side of the river -- I don't know how many tens of thousands of tourists there are every day here in this town -- they go along down here by the river, and they look across to this -- er -- lovely waterfront on the other side, and an unobstructed view of Arlington Cemetery -- the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier -- Lee's Homestead, and everything else.

And here it is -- under the name of emergency, it is proposed to put up a permanent building, which will deliberately and definitely, for one hundred years to come, spoil the plan of the National Capital. Quite aside from any question of access to it, or where people live, how you get across the bridge, or anything else, I think that I have had a part in spoiling the National Parks and the beautiful waterfront of the District once, and I don't want to do it again.

There are various other ways of handling the problem of space in the District. I'm going back to the -- to the consideration of another possibility. As you know, the plan -- oh, what was it? -- six or seven years ago -- was accepted to build the new War Department on this side of the Naval Hospital, and build the Navy Department on the other side of the Naval Hospital. And I sort of felt that I was -- er -- perhaps squaring myself with the Good Lord by building those two buildings

during my Administration, and being able to take down the present Navy Building and Munitions Building in the park.

Now, I am perfectly willing for the War Department, which does need space very much, to go ahead and add some more at the present location for the War Department, and start right in and build the building which has been labeled for the Navy Department on the other side of the Naval Hospital hill. Turn that new Navy Department building over to the War Department until peace comes in the world. And when that time comes, the Army of course will cut down tremendously on its employees, and the Navy will be able to go back to its own building. Actually on footage -- square feet -- the thing can be worked out pretty well. This building that is proposed on the other side of the river is much larger actually than we need in Washington. Besides which, it spoils the planning of 150 years.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: (Loudly) Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: There you are. You got it.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #763,

Held in the Study of the President's Home
at Hyde Park, N. Y.

August 22, 1941 -- 11.30 A.M., E.D.T.

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good morning. How is everybody? Did you have a nice ride?

Q Indeed.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think after this performance we can put the lid on.

There should be no further news. I am not going to guarantee anything.

I won't see Mr. Churchill over the week end, or Mr. Mackenzie King,

or any other Prime Minister. You might play golf, as a suggestion.

I don't think there is any news.

Oh yes there is too. I entirely forgot. I heard about and read that -- er -- speech by Senator Byrd (Senator Harry F. Byrd of Virginia), giving figures on defense production, and I sent it to the War Department to ask for a check on the figures, and the War Department said that most unfortunately all of the figures, except on planes, are completely inaccurate, and somebody -- unfortunately -- has misled the Senator. But -- er -- there are certain figures, of course, that the War Department -- er -- for obvious reasons can't give out the exact figures on, but they gave me certain illustrations -- er -- on things that they said it's all right to make public, which -- er -- illustrations are examples of all of the other cases -- of figures to use, except airplanes.

Er -- the Senator said that not a single tank had gone to England. Actually, we have turned over to the British hundreds of tanks of modern design produced during the last year. Some of these tanks, as

we all know, are in Egypt, and the papers have had various stories on the excellence of their performance. They are with the British in Egypt.

In the case of anti-aircraft guns, the Senator said the program provides for an average monthly delivery of only four 90-mm. guns a month during the balance of this year. The program actually calls for a monthly delivery of 61 for the four remaining months of this year, and the War Department believes that they will be met. In other words, there is a certain difference between the figure 4 and the figure 61.

And on -- another example is the 37-mm. anti-tank gun. The Senator said that these guns will be produced only at the rate of 15 a month.

Q Is that anti-tank, sir, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Anti-tank. Actual production in July was 72.

August production will be 160; September 260 and October 320.

Q What was the Senator's figure on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: 15.

Q 15.

THE PRESIDENT: There seems to be ---

Q (interposing) What are those months again, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: The next four -- July, August, September and October. There seems to be a certain discrepancy between the figure 15 and the figures that I have just given. Even if you add a zero to 15 you would still be way below the actual numbers. Er -- fourth, the Senator said that only 15 81-mm. mortars will be produced in the immediate months ahead. In July there were actually, instead of 15, there were 221 produced, and in August the figure is 340.

Q Excuse me, Mr. President, what type of gun was that?

THE PRESIDENT: 81-mm. mortar -- now you know as much about it as I do --

(laughter) -- and the figures for September and October will be even larger than 340, so there would seem to be somewhat of a difference between the figure 15 and the figure 340. The figures, of course, on the airplanes, are substantially correct, except that we said that the production of military planes progressively declined in the months of June and July, which is not strictly true. The number of training planes increased and the others remained steady -- the military planes, because there were certain changes in -- er -- design, and the testing of the new design to meet lessons that were learned this spring.

Q Training planes increase?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Training planes increase?

THE PRESIDENT: Increase - yes, and the others remained steady on account of change in design. But the fact that remains -- that statement as a whole in every single item, except planes, was full of discrepancies that ran just as high as those discrepancies which I have -- the War Department says it's all right to mention.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, what ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I -- I -- one reason I did this -- this is off the record -- was because yesterday I got various messages saying, "My God, is that true what Senator Byrd has said?" Of course it isn't. For instance, various people concerned -- the editorial staff of the New York Times -- they wrote an editorial this morning saying this is terrible, if true. Well ---

Q (interposing) They also assured you a place in Heaven this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (he laughs) And -- er -- of course, it should be -- in all fairness to the statement -- somebody sold him down the river on the figures.

Q Did he cite what the source of his figures were?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, do you happen to know what figures he did give on airplanes?

THE PRESIDENT: Exactly the same way you know. They were given out by O.P.M.

Q Yes. Was he talking about deliveries to the American Army, or total production?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He was just talking about deliveries -- completions.

Q Is there anything you can tell us, sir, about this Kearny ship situation?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that they are still conferring, and I suppose I will be called up by both sides in the course of the day.

Q Er -- John Green, who is the head of the union, told us when he came out that -- er -- the Government did not want to take over the Yard. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: Not if we can help it.

Q Did you offer any other proposal?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Tried to get them together. That was all.

Q Does it look as if you can help taking it over?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Does it look as if you will be able to take it over?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I can't guess.

Q Mr. President, on another subject, this Iran situation seems to be fairly hot, and one press association out of London yesterday said that you had been kept fully in accord -- were in accord on the policy that the British were adopting. Can you say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Except that is an illustration of the freedom of the press in London. (he laughs) It isn't true. I don't know anything about it.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- aside from chlorinated water -- er -- Congressman Fish and Dr. McCracken of Vassar, both addressed recent America First rallies, and Fish has pointed out -- has gotten to the point now where he was quoted as saying that if Germany should lose, why America -- America would suffer through loss of markets and buying power.

THE PRESIDENT: If Germany loses?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: So, he thinks we wouldn't lose if Germany won. (he laughs) I don't think any comment that could be printed is necessary. (he laughs again)

Q Of course, Dr. McCracken has taken the point of view that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You know, once upon a time there was a fellow -- this you might use only as background -- there was a fellow who had a great deal more information and was a much more reasoning person than any of the people -- I won't say Fish or McCracken -- it's obvious whom I am talking about. His name is Senator Borah -- in many ways a very great statesman, and certainly with experience and information that was far better than most of the speakers. And he was the gentleman who in July, 1939 -- the famous conference upstairs -- after the Secretary of State, who had still more information than he had, and -- er -- said that, "From our information we really believed regretfully that a war would break out that year," turned to the Secretary of State and said, "I am sorry, Mr. Secretary, my information is better than yours. There will be no war this year." (he laughs) And yet he had been on the Foreign Relations Committee and everything else, and had

been there for years and years -- nearly forty years. In the Senate he certainly had far more information than any of these people that were going around making speeches today; and of course his error has become a classic.

Q Walter Lippmann says that these Senators -- the Foreign Relations group -- are people that got us into trouble over a long period of years.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, and a good many other people have got us in trouble over a period of years.

Q Mr. Fish is on the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House. Maybe that qualifies him to make a few errors.

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- off the record -- that is probably correct.

(laughter)

Q Mr. President, there seems to be quite a little confusion about this tanker situation. Some Senators yesterday put in a resolution asking for the investigation of whether there was really an oil shortage, etc. Any comment or anything you can say on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing. There is nothing to hide on the questions of stocks of oil, and location of the stocks of oil, and production of oil. There is nothing to hide on the world situation on tankers as long as the -- any information given to the Senate about the war use of tankers is not used to hurt the cause of Democracies.

Q Mr. President, have you heard directly from Mr. Stalin on the proposal of the three-party conference on supplies?

THE PRESIDENT: You have all the stuff.

Q Have you got to the point yet, sir, of naming your commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Naming your commission?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q How soon.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. The time hasn't been set.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The State Department is taking it up all the time.

Q Mr. President, off the record, is any written reply called for on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Off the record, the reply in effect has been made, because when the -- this has to be off the record -- I think it has been printed. I don't know, but there is no use to bring the subject up again. It isn't news. When the message was delivered by Steinhardt (Laurence A. Steinhardt, U. S. Ambassador to Russia) and the other fellow -- Cripps? -- er -- Mr. Stalin -- er -- informally thanked them very much for it and then made an oral reply which was taken down, the same thing as a written reply. You might call it a formal oral reply, and was taken down by way of what the diplomats would say, an "Aide Memoire". There is no difference between that and a written one. Same thing.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think it was printed too.

Q (softly) Excuse me, I didn't mean to interrupt.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Getting back to the oil situation there has been a suggestion that the shortage on the East Coast -- that the whole country up to the Rocky Mountains might as well suffer, and that the rationing might apply, and tank cars might as well be taken away from the West -- Middle West for the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What for? For punishment?

Q Just to make everybody unhappy equally. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) Beyond me.

Q Mr. President, we understand that you cut off imports of crab meat.

THE PRESIDENT: Of what?

Q Crab meat.

THE PRESIDENT: Crab meat?

Q Yes. We get a lot from Japan. I wonder if that had any particular reference ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I never heard of it. (he laughs) On that crab meat, I will have to tell you -- this is off the record -- a very amusing story. Old Dan Roper, when he was Secretary of Commerce, had under him the Fisheries Bureau, and one day in Cabinet I said, "Dan, have you got any news for us today?" Yes, indeed I have," says Uncle Dan, "Crabs". I said, "What??" -- (laughter) He said, "A most amazing thing. I am very much worried. You know, up there on the coast of Alaska they have these wonderful crabs." And he said, "That big across." (the President indicated with his hands a width of about thirty inches) I said, "What??" Well, he was measuring somewhere -- twenty-four to thirty inches across. Literally with his hands. "Oh, no," I said, "You're exaggerating." "No," he said, "I tell you they are that wide across." And I said, "Dan, Dan, you're exaggerating." "No," he said, "my people tell me. I have never been there -- they are that big across." And he wouldn't yield one inch -- (laughter) -- as to the size of this crab.

I said, "What about it?" "Well," he said, "the Japs are coming in there, just up to the three-mile limit, and they are catching these

crabs. I said, "Dan, you must be exaggerating." "No, the Japs are catching these crabs. On the boat they catch them they have a crab factory." I said, "What?" -- (laughter) He said, "They do everything to that crab." I said, "Dan, they are as big as that?" "I tell you it's as big as that." And he said, "They take them on the boat with all these nets that catch them, when they go to lay their eggs I think it is." And he said, "They process them right on the boat. Take out the meat and boil it, whatever it is, and they do all the canning right on board."

Well, actually, that part of it is ours. The Japs have been coming in the Alaskan boats and have been catching crabs with their nets and doing the whole processing right on board. An amazing thing. Whenever I hear about crabs I think of Uncle Dan's hands. (laughter) Not the fish that got away.

Q Mr. President, in connection with your Executive Order on this crab meat, may we use that for background -- that the Japanese are processing?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, they have been doing it for years.

Q Are they still doing that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know. We had -- I really haven't heard -- this has got to be off the record, because it is so damn old. Er -- the Japanese salmon catch or crab catch in the last of the year -- we did take up at that time a rather interesting point in -- I don't know whether you would call it international law or international relations. Off Alaska somewhere up to the northern end of the bend -- (indicating) -- there is a shelf that from the coast you go down to -- I don't know -- fifty or one hundred fathoms, and this shelf that goes out is about sixty to one hundred miles. In other words, beyond any three-mile or

twenty-mile limit.

And er -- in other words, to get to the spawning grounds both the salmon and the crabs have to go across this shelf, and being a shallow shelf, you can put down these nets -- gill nets and crab nets etc., and catch these fish in the area that they have to traverse to get to the spawning grounds.

Well, of course, we have always protected at that time of the year salmon and crabs that were going up the estuaries of the Alaskan rivers at the mouths of the bays. They have always been protected, and these Japs were catching them sixty, eighty and a hundred miles off shore in waters that they had to traverse, and I frankly -- I don't know what happened, but we took up with the Japanese government the stopping of the fishing -- the netting on that shelf. A nice point, of course. If you are going to protect them, you have got to protect them all the way out to deep water, even if it is a hundred miles.

Q Delegate Diamond inserted something in the Congressional Record saying that Alaska is going to get ready to do some shooting, if the Japs ever stop them. They were pretty much exercised about it for a while.

Q Well, if we say the Japanese have been -- in relation to the Executive Order, have been sending in 24-inch crabs, will you stand by it?
(laughter)

Q Mr. President, on this production matter, do you feel that over-all the production has been satisfactory from a military point of view?

THE PRESIDENT: It has never been satisfactory.

Q But it has not lagged behind the program?

THE PRESIDENT: Behind estimates? In some things it is ahead of estimates, and some things behind. Of course, that is on the -- on the assumption

always that the -- that the original estimates were right. There is always the human possibility that they were too low. And there is the possibility in some other cases that they were too high. But on the actual estimates the averages were up too.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Somebody -- I don't think anybody has asked Mr. Knudsen in the last two or three months. I should think somebody ought to ask him. You remember he talked about airplanes and gave the figure of 85% of the estimates. Quite a long while ago. And what his present estimate is, I don't know, but pretty close to the estimate. I got up to -- as I remember it, the original estimate -- you will have to check on this -- don't quote me -- the original estimate I think was 1500 planes in -- first of July, and they were up to -- what the actual figure -- what? -- 1465 as I remember it at that time. That is a month -- that is a monthly production.

Q Mr. President, one more local item. Your friend Elmer Van Wagner is going to run for Supervisor again in the town, and in that connection, he has made quite a point on this troublesome equalization taxation rate question. Of course his view is that in the town of Hyde Park, and not only here but in some other towns in the County, if the assessments were generally increased they would have a better equalization rate and thus get more returns for our State monies, you see, and they would have a better shake all the way around, and they wouldn't lose anything, and the taxes in dollars and cents would not be any higher. I don't know whether you have recalled anything, or you think that is worth commenting on.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There are too many local complications

to every -- every town in the country, as you know -- I mean county. Every township has a process of its own, and the -- the old method of complete township freedom was taken in hand by the legislature years ago when they put through the equalization bill.

Q (interjecting) Uh huh.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is a very desirable thing to have all valuations of real estate -- er -- using the same principle all through the State, not just the County, the whole State.

Q Oh, he doesn't question the principle at all. As a matter of fact he is for it. He thinks that we lag behind and were not taking advantage of it.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that has been true, when I was Governor.

Q In Dutchess County as a whole.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q (interposing) To that extent you are ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There was less uniformity than in almost any other county in the State.

Q Mr. President, one more question. Is your meeting Saturday with the Duke of Kent social? Do you intend ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Purely social. Nothing else. In fact, no pictures even. No broadcasts. No nothing. Too bad. (he laughs)

Q Are you going to take him to church?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are you going to take him to church?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you that on the record, but the chances are -- No, because Dr. Wilson's away.

Q At Campobello?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Campobello?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q We are glad that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You put the lid on.

Q Durno has been elected delegate to go. (to church)

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) That might almost cause me to go. (laughter)

George needs it. (more laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #764,
Executive Offices of the President,
August 26, 1941 -- 4.15 P.M., E.S.T.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) we might as well get that started now.

(handing typewritten sheet to Mr. Early)

The first thing I got is a statement, which you needn't take down.

Steve sent it down to be put on the mimeograph -- one page.

(Reading): "This Government is prepared to send a military mission to China. The mission will be sent for the purpose of assisting in carrying out the purposes of the Lease-Lend Act. Being organized and will operate under the direction of the Secretary of War. The chief will be Brigadier General John Magruder. The function of the mission will be to study in collaboration with Chinese and other authorities the military situation in China, and need of Chinese government for materiel. Formulate recommendations regarding types and quantities of items needed to assist and procure in this country and in delivery to China of such materiel to instruct in the use and maintenance of articles thus provided. Give advice and suggestions of appropriate character toward making Lend-Lease assistance to China as effective as possible in the interests of the United States, of China, and of the world effort to resistance to movements of conquest by force. Sending this mission is in keeping with, and on a parallel line to sending a similar mission to the Soviet Union. The purposes of the two missions are identical."

That is, of course, with the exception of the Lend-Lease Act which does not apply to the Soviet Union. Er -- (reading)

"General Magruder has had long experience in China. Has twice served there as Military Attache. He will be working on familiar ground, among people he knows well, and to whom he is well known. An adequate staff of thoroughly qualified officers will accompany General Magruder."

You will get copies of this.

Q Mr. President, one question on that specific thing: The Chinese Minister indicated this morning they might give strategic advice as well.

THE PRESIDENT: Give what?

Q Strategic advice as well.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea.

Q Mr. President, on that -- why does not the Lend-Lease Act apply to Soviet Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: It just doesn't.

Q Mr. President, your announcement says that these men will call with Chinese and 'other authorities'. Can you explain the 'other authorities'?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, but I will make a guess: That it probably applies to the method of getting material to China which might have to go, for example, through Burma. That would be other authorities, wouldn't it?

Q How about the Russians?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about the Russians?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing.

Q When would they really leave?

THE PRESIDENT: I think inside of about two weeks.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, I may have missed some recent conferences, but have you issued a similar statement like that with regard to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. GODWIN: Is there anything you can say about it?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing yet.

Q How soon do you expect to appoint the Russian mission?

THE PRESIDENT: Soon.

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing unusual in delaying that, is there, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not a thing.

Q Mr. President, the Japanese Ambassador told us on Saturday that he thought the gap between our respective policies must be bridged.

Would you care to tell us how you think that gap could be bridged?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the Secretary of State has already been asked that question. (laughter)

Q (softly) Without much success.

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- the only other thing I have got is, I am making progress on the new War Department building. Start taking this down, Earl. (Mr. Godwin) (the President laughs) Er -- it seems to be the best solution to put the greater part of the building on the so-called Quartermaster site, and perhaps a small portion of -- of the -- er -- parking area on the -- what is it? -- south end of the Agricultural Farm. So that makes it entirely within the bill.

MR. GODWIN: Does it make it all in Virginia?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Isn't it all in Virginia?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Wait a minute. That is the building under this appropriation, you see.

Then comes the question of the size, and -- er -- oh, what shall I say? -- I have rather come to the conclusion that there is -- while there are two sides to the question of traffic congestion -- er -- perhaps a building of two million -- two and a quarter million feet, instead of four million, would be able to get the traffic to it.

One thing -- it does not seem to be clear -- that the building as proposed by the War Department -- over four million feet -- would require the staggering of the hours of work by as much as two hours,

from the people who first went there in the morning to the people who last went there in the morning, in order to get them all there. Same way, in the afternoon, start the first crowd going home two hours before the last crowd went home; and that is a pretty difficult thing. So it looks as if I would finally make the decision not to make the building more than two, or two and a quarter million square feet, which probably could be handled.

Now, that also raises another question. Er -- I am very anxious to go ahead and finish, have finished, or make progress in finishing this -- er -- what do they call it? -- northwest triangle up here. In other words, carry out the plans to put the War Department there, and on the other side of Hospital Hill to put the -- the new Navy Department. And eventually, I again -- I hope before I die to be able to tear down the two excrescences down in Potomac Park, the present Navy Building and the present Munitions Building. Now, if that is carried out the Navy -- the new Navy Building would obviously hold the whole of the peacetime Navy establishment, and the same way the -- a War Department developed on the site which we have already begun, would probably hold the whole of a peacetime military establishment, on certain conditions.

And it brings up another subject that happens to be almost a fully grown child of mine. Nobody knows it. Nobody has ever seen the child -- yet. It's an idea.

We have in the Government an enormous number of papers, which are not archives. They are records. Well, there is all the difference in the world. Archives are supposed to be -- er -- really tremendously important papers relating to our national history, and rather

limited in their total scope. On the other hand, there are millions and millions of records which are occasionally looked at, but which are not of general historical importance, but which are of family or geneological importance. For instance, we have, I think, in -- somewhere around three million individual jackets of the Civil War soldiers and -- soldiers. And the tendency of any Department is to hang on. It's -- it's not merely acquisitive, but it is retentive.

And here are these three million jackets. Now the individual soldiers that served in the Civil War actually they are referred to about ten a day, that is all. In other words, one filing clerk can handle the whole thing and get them out as needed. We have -- oh, what? -- public lands records -- the development of the great West -- oh, as far as -- back, I don't know -- 1820 or 1830 -- I think the Interior Department has jurisdiction over them. There are millions and millions of those and only -- what? -- ten or fifteen of them referred to in the course of the day. They are records rather than archives, and what we need is a great records building. The Census records, they are dead. The Census records going back as far as, I think, 1790. Those are records, and they certainly are not archives. They ought not to be kept in the -- the building devoted to current Administrations.

Now, my thought is that this new War Department building over there would be built on extremely simple lines, and that when this emergency is over, and the War Department is -- reverts to a peacetime status, they will be able to come back here to their regular place in this quadrangle -- triangle -- which we are developing, and that in peacetime this building over there, of two million, or two and a

quarter million feet, should be the -- I think the word is repository, for the records -- the dead records of all these Departments.

I always think of this retentive spirit. I went over, in pursuance of this subject -- two or three years ago -- to the State Department one afternoon -- after all the people had gone home -- because they assured me that in the State Department over here they only had very current records. Nothing more than four or five years old. Everything else was stored. Well, frankly, I didn't believe it, and I went over there, and I got into a wheel chair, and I wheeled through various rooms, and came to a closed door which had been separated off.

One of these great doors was opened up, and there was a great, big, long room -- oh, I suppose six or eight people had worked there in the course of the day -- nobody there, they had all gone home -- and along the sides of the room and stacked out into the middle of the room were hundreds of square feet of filing cabinets. So I -- at random I said, "Open that one." And in there it happened to be a case that was devoted to consular reports of the year 19 -- years 1907 to 1911, on the 'History and Future of the Mongolian Pony'. (laughter) It's very nice, but it wasn't exactly current, or of great importance at that particular time. It was a record story, and it ought not to have been in that building, which was -- State Department -- yelling for more space. They had it right there. So I hope that this new building, when this emergency is over, will be used as a records building for the Government.

MR. GODWIN: Can I ask a question at that point? There were certain aesthetic considerations with respect to this ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now this ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Does this take care ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now this takes care of it entirely. This new site down there is not in front of Arlington Cemetery.

MR. GODWIN: No.

Q Mr. President, can we get to trivia for a moment? (laughter) Mr. Edwin S. Smith ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Don't think 'Mongolian Pony' is way above trivia?

Q Yes, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good God! I don't like your implication. (he laughs)

Q The term of Mr. Edwin S. Smith expires tonight ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) -- of the National Labor Relations Board. Any plans in that connection?

THE PRESIDENT: No decision yet.

Q Can you tell us what Mr. Matthew McCloskey of Philadelphia came to see you about today?

THE PRESIDENT: If you want to know, he was talking to me about a new Mayor for Philadelphia, and I said I didn't know enough about it to have any opinion.

Q Did he ask you to recommend a Mayor? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. He came to tell me that there was a paucity of candidates.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Did Mr. David L. Lawrence of the -- the National Committeeman of Pennsylvania come to see you today?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Neither of the David Lawrences. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you tell us about this conference that you just had with Secretary Knox and Mr. Biddle?

THE PRESIDENT: It's the preliminary to what I told you at Hyde Park, to -- er -- discuss the method of operating the Kearny plant.

Q Any decision?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. The next step will be that they will list the different methods, and then after that they probably will have a talk with the owners of the plant.

Q Mr. President, will the Navy abide by the recommendations of the Defense Mediation Board in operating that plant?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends who operates the plant.

Q Mr. President, there are rumors that Lend-Lease has been misused.

Would you care to comment on those rumors?

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q There have been printed rumors.

THE PRESIDENT: I mean -- but where?

Q One of them that I read in a local paper was that the British had run up large bills at a local restaurant -- whiskey -- liquor.

THE PRESIDENT: Where?

Q The restaurant? Occidental Restaurant.

THE PRESIDENT: I am very certain that that was never charged to Lend-

Lease. And I suppose it's a perfectly fair thing to say, in view of these columns -- I think it has got to the point where it can be said, in view of your raising the question, that there can be no doubt that there is an organized campaign to spread rumors, distortions of half-truths, and I fear -- (indicating) -- it says falsehoods -- you probably

know the word -- being launched by certain forces to sabotage the program of aid to opponents of Hitlerism. And your -- the column which you quote is probably a very good example of what I am talking about. And of course it is perfectly absurd to make any allegations along the lines like that -- general lines, because they just plain aren't true. Awfully easy to make allegations and they're read all over the country. Don't say that it is a denial on my part or on anybody else's part.

I think it is a perfectly fair thing to say that all stories of that kind are, as I remarked before, vicious rumors, or distortions of fact, or falsehoods. Now, in other words, that is not a denial. You know my old complaint about things. The denial -- er -- method is awfully easy for the press to use, but the actual fact is that this type of story -- in certain types of newspapers -- ought to be labeled for what they are, and the story is the labeling of them as falsehoods, and the spreading of rumor for purposes of sabotage rather than the denial. Denial does not make any difference one way or the other. It's just plain dirty falsehood. Might just as well call it by its right name.

MR. GODWIN: Are you familiar with an article -- I think it was published in Time? The report of it was that Lend-Lease money had been utilized by English interests in such a way that the product of this transaction interfered with or competed with American-made goods.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Are you familiar with that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Of course, what the origin of it was is this, that they did have -- dating back a long time -- long before any Lend-Lease

program, or anything like that, where they were trying to build up their own -- er -- foreign exchange, they had some contracts down there -- I think it was the Argentine -- which required certain steel to carry the contract. And in the performance of this contract -- it was entered into long before Lend-Lease -- they did deliver the material, which was part steel, in carrying out the contract. Now, nobody in their wildest dreams could say that that was selling Lend-Lease material. (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: Was it American steel that they sent down there?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It was their own steel, but of course they imported steel from us.

MR. GODWIN: I don't want to appear to be putting you on the spot, of course.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Well, you see ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) I am very much interested in the statement that you make, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That's the kind of half-truth that is just as bad as a whole falsehood.

MR. GODWIN: I was going to ask a question which was more than evident. Do you have time to devote to these things -- this tremendous Lease-Lend program?

THE PRESIDENT: The thing was raised, I think, on the floor of Congress, or in the Senate. It was checked very carefully both here and in London.

Q That same kind of thing is coming out with regard to tankers now. Stories that the British have tankers in commercial use, which is being picked on in the Senate.

THE PRESIDENT: Being what?

Q Well, it's being kicked around in the Senate that the British are using tankers for commercial purposes, while we are not.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course that is the kind of variation -- you have got to tell me where. We ran down the other question. We said, "Where?" to -- er -- the person who asked the question -- what? -- about the steel, and we narrowed it down finally and we agreed it was steel to the Argentine. I think on the tankers in commercial use, where?

Q They are basing their argument, Mr. President, on total figures of tankers in existence at the start of the war -- estimated sinkings according to official figures, and they say that there will be more in commercial service than they have got -- more than they need for war use.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, that does not hold water, that kind of a statement. It means nothing. When you deduce from total figures you do not know where the rest of it is going.

MR. GODWIN: Can you answer this question? Has the British government asked for -- for any more tankers? The rumor's out -- 70 or 100 tankers.

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I can only tell you in terms of merchant ships. I think the story was in today's paper about the laying down of more ways for more merchant ships. Now some of them may be tankers.

MR. GODWIN: No. This is a statement which came from the Senate anonymously. The anonymous Senator said that 70 tankers -- I know the story said 100 oil tankers -- for carrying oil would be taken from America for British needs. Do you happen to know anything about that at all?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. As a matter of fact, of course, on the oil situation, there are two reasons to believe that in the East this question

of domestic oil will be better by spring. The two reasons are the fact that there will be a lot more tankers launched and put into commission by then, on the assumption that the sinkings don't increase, and we will have a greater number available; and the second is that the two pipe lines will be in use sometime this spring. Of course that will help.

Q Mr. President, has Judge Rosenman reported to you yet on his study of the O.P.M. and O.P.A.C.S. priorities trouble?

THE PRESIDENT: We are nearly ready to tell you something. The papers are now being worked on. And the problem, of course -- this particular problem is the problem of priorities. And there are a great many factors that enter into priorities. There is -- er -- domestic use, and what is very important is the fact that in addition to domestic use there are other things like South American Good Neighbor policy, ^[Economic Defense Board?] this new Economic Council, and er -- the Vice President.

There is the problem of -- of China, and, I think, equally important, is the problem of working out -- er -- on the use of priorities -- giving work -- putting people to work in industries that have those plants that have to close down, or transfer to other defense projects, or the substitution of other things for the plant itself to make. And that is the -- being worked out, so that while there may be, in the next few weeks, a certain amount of hardship, I think to tide it over we will have to use Unemployment Insurance for a while, until we get the organization perfected -- er -- so that there will be a little leeway of thirty days or sixty days before any given plant is closed down for lack of materials; and that during those thirty days, or sixty days, the Federal authorities, the State

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authorities, and the local authorities will all cooperate to put those people to work somewhere else, as nearby as possible, or in the same plant on other things.

Q Mr. President, that would indicate that you favor an inter-departmental committee on priorities?

THE PRESIDENT: No, not necessarily.

Q There have been published stories, Mr. President, that a seven-man board ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There have been all kinds of things. A seventy-man board.

Q I haven't seen that one, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: One-man board suggestion. You will see it when the thing comes out. You will have to wait about twenty-four hours.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #765,
Executive Offices of the President,
August 29, 1941 -- 10:50 A.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: How are the boys this morning?

Q Quite a story last night.

THE PRESIDENT: You have written enough --

Q (interposing) That's the way we feel.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- until tomorrow. (To Mr. Godwin): Getting old?

MR. GODWIN: (sitting down) Old man. I had a glass of beer and two alkaseltzers this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: You can make this a very short party.

MR. GODWIN: What?

THE PRESIDENT: I say you can make this very short. I will give you a local story on this new building. I would like to have some comments from you on this proposition over here.

MR. GODWIN: Are you going to say something about it?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to see it some time. I don't know yet.

I don't think there is any particular news. I suggest that, as you have already written yourself out last night, you should take a little holiday. I'll have a story tomorrow afternoon.

Q Story tomorrow afternoon -- tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q (continuing) On the Far East, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: The Roosevelt Home Club. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Are you going home tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: Tonight.

Moses Smith's farm. Come up and see it. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, on the twentieth of last June the German Charge was handed a copy of your reply on the sinking of the Robin Moor. Has any reply from the German government ever been received?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you will have to ask the State Department.

Q I did, sir. They wouldn't tell me.

Q Mr. President, would you care to say anything about your meeting with the Japanese Ambassador?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Any comment on it at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Not more than what was said yesterday.

Q Do you think we are getting anywhere?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that there is no news on that today. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, are you ready to name the mission to Moscow yet?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet, no. We are talking about that. I suppose by next week, early in the week, it will be ready. I think you can assume safely that Mr. Harriman will go.

Q As head of the mission, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, can you expand any more on just what Mr. Biggers ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Can you expand on just what John Biggers is going to do in London in synchronizing production?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose the best way to put it is this: that -- you remember some -- quite a long while ago, we sent Harriman over there, primarily for one thing, which was the maritime end of things -- general

world shipping is what it amounted to, in order to assist in getting aid over to the -- to the Democracies. And his position normally and naturally enlarged itself beyond shipping to take into consideration -- er -- totals of production, and supply materials of all kinds. Now we have got to the point where I need another general trouble-shooter -- just what he is now. Mr. Harriman's going to Moscow as head of this mission -- er -- will take him away a short time from London. He has got to have some trouble-shooter in London to take his place during his absence, and Mr. Biggers is going over there -- er -- to take care of Mr. Harriman's work in London, while he is away from London. Also, because he is a specialist on the production end, to tie that in more thoroughly to our production problems that has been done before. I think that really explains it. It is an exceedingly important -- er -- place to be filled at all times. Somebody there.

MR. GODWIN: Er ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It does not take away in any way from the important work Mr. Harriman is doing. Of course, as I said before, Mr. Harriman will become available for use in other places. He has been, as you know -- he has been in the Near East -- quite a long while down there, and he is going to -- to Russia. And in effect I have doubled the number of my trouble-shooters. Harry Hopkins remains a trouble-shooter, and I add Harriman to him.

Q Would it be fair to say that Harriman becomes your Lend-Lease administrator at large here?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I wouldn't put it that way. (he laughs)

Q Will Mr. Biggers stay in London? Will it just be temporary, or what?

THE PRESIDENT: What? As long as it is necessary.

Q Can you say anything about who is going to take charge of production when Mr. Biggers is leaving?

THE PRESIDENT: Who is going to take charge of production?

Q At. O.P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I suppose O.P.M. will work it out in due course.

Q I thought you named the divisional head?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, how large a mission do you expect to go to Moscow?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know yet.

Q Would it be more than half a dozen?

THE PRESIDENT: Something like that.

Q Mr. President, what is the situation now on the War Department building?

THE PRESIDENT: On what?

Q The War Department building?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, as soon as I can, I am going over to see the site.

But there is one thing -- I was just telling Earl (Mr. Godwin). There is rather an interesting prospect which has come up, and I don't mind throwing the thing out as -- as what? -- I call it a trial balloon.

Out West, in a number of cities -- er -- there have been built -- I don't know that there are any in the East -- er -- solid buildings, that is to say, buildings where the only -- the only daylight in them is from the outside of the -- of a quadrangle -- quadrangle -- four-sided building; but there are no courts on the inside, no windows on the inside -- a completely solid building, which means, of course, that -- er -- it saves a tremendous lot of money, but you do have to work under artificial light. And where they have been tried it worked extremely well.

Of course, practically all -- er -- air nowadays, in the insides of building -- buildings -- is brought in mechanically.

Whether it's -- er -- refrigerated -- air-cooled or air-warmed, it is brought in with fans from outside the building. Most of it is ejected also by mechanical processes.

Er -- we know a great deal more about that sort of thing than we ever did before. And the same way in light -- with these new tube lights, whatever they are called. Artificial lighting very often is a great deal better to work with than daylight, because it is uniform all over the room, and because it doesn't vary in intensity, whether the sun is shining, or whether it is a very, very dark day. And I am studying the question now of the possibility of a solid building, with artificial light, and artificial air and -- er -- save an enormous amount of money, and from the point of view of a great many of the specialists and doctors, etc., a better building for people to work in.

MR. GODWIN: About how many million square feet would it take, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you would save all the courtyard space.

MR. GODWIN: You had two million square feet ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. GODWIN: You had two million square feet, when you spoke of it the other day.

THE PRESIDENT: That is another kind. Let us say two million feet.

MR. GODWIN: Cubic feet?

THE PRESIDENT: Two million feet might not hold all of the wings, so that you have daylight into the rooms on each side of a corridor -- an enormous number of wings. Well, that means inside walls -- er -- on

courts and niches, and so forth and so on. Call it two million feet. You probably haven't two million feet. Let us say twenty wings. Now you still would have two million feet but it would be a solid building, you see.

MR. GODWIN: I see.

THE PRESIDENT: No courts whatsoever. Just a four-sided building. Oh, I don't know what you do with these figures, because they are by way of -- er -- suppose it was one thousand feet long, and one thousand feet wide, you would only have four outside walls. Think of all those room on the inside. No windows.

Q It would be on the Quartermaster depot site?

THE PRESIDENT: Somewhere in that direction.

Q But not ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) South of the Arlington Farm.

Q Uh huh.

Q But not along the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am going out to look at it.

Q Today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know when I am going.

- Q Mr. President, the second anniversary of the World War is approaching.

Is the outlook better to you than on the first anniversary?

THE PRESIDENT: I am making a speech on Monday, which is the second anniversary.

Q Mr. President, would it be too broad a question to inquire -- er -- whether as a result of the latest developments you are hopeful that war in the Pacific can be averted?

THE PRESIDENT: I would call it too long and too broad. (laughter)

Q (interposing) (softly) May I shorten it?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Both the question and the ocean.

Q Mr. President, can you explain what the Supply -- function of the Supply Priorities and Allocations Board is going to be?

THE PRESIDENT: That was all taken up yesterday afternoon. I think it was all pretty generally and completely explained, and I don't think there is any necessity or advisability of trying to paraphrase language that all of you people got yesterday afternoon -- last night. Because if I were to -- if I had a transcript of what was said I would read the transcript to you. Otherwise, I might change the sentence a little bit, and somebody would call attention to it. You see my difficulty?

Q Mr. President, the Secretary of State said you would probably see Admiral Nomura again. Has any date been set for that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q Mr. President, your old friend Senator Byrd introduced an economy resolution in the Senate Finance Committee yesterday, and the Committee adopted an amendment to the tax bill, setting up an investigating committee to find out how we can cut down on non-essential spending. Do you think we can cut down on non-essential spending?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q How much would you say?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have advocated it for a long time. You see, I don't pass appropriation bills.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Hull also told us that he expected you would probably reply to the Prime Minister's message.

THE PRESIDENT: I imagine that is correct.

Q Could you tell us how soon?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (he laughs)

Q Could you tell us whether it is being drafted now?

THE PRESIDENT: What the reply will be? No. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #766,
Executive Offices of the President,
September 2, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, what's the news? Where's Pa? (General Watson)

Q He wasn't outside.

THE PRESIDENT: Wasn't he? He's back. I don't know where he is.

(To Mr. T. Reynolds): Is that true that you filed 15,000?

MR. T. REYNOLDS: 14,776.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a long-distance record.

MR. GODWIN: At Hyde Park?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: The previous week-end was 12,200, so it isn't all fun.

THE PRESIDENT: It's all right.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Doug Cornell at least equaled me, and I think heavier.

THE PRESIDENT: Telegraph company's making money.

MR. D. CORNELL: They'll declare a dividend.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. D. CORNELL: They'll declare a dividend.

Q That's a lot of news.

THE PRESIDENT: Do you suppose, taking it by and large, that they make
money on press rates?

Q They get about -- they get a quantity ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) They get what?

Q Less than one cent a word.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I was wondering whether they make money on it or not.

Q I think they do.

THE PRESIDENT: They do?

MR. GODWIN: I should think they would if they had idle equipment.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: Like those night rates, and that stuff.

Q They are not altruistic. They are in business to make a profit.

THE PRESIDENT: They never get any night business out of Hyde Park. Everybody goes to bed early. Those boys are in bed at ten o'clock every night. (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: I used to catch McIntyre in bed at ten or eleven o'clock -- in the morning. (laughter)

Q If you continue making these speeches, Western Union will do even better.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(To Mr. Godwin): You should have been there Saturday. I took them for a Mark Twain. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't been back long enough to find out anything.

Q Have you found out what kind of a War Department building you are going to have, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- practically. I did do that.

Q Can you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have been going over the preliminary plans, and it will be probably a pentagonal building -- that means five-sided, if you don't remember your Greek -- (laughter) -- and will have in one of the interior -- er -- courts, it will have that thing I was talking about, which is a solid block, about -- what? -- 175 feet each way, to test out this windowless proposition. See if it works. But it is only one out of perhaps about 15 of these interior courts. And it will house not 40,000 people but about 20,000 people.

Q Did you decide on the location?

THE PRESIDENT: Location is on the -- er -- what do they call it? -- the Quartermaster site, and everybody's approved it. It does not interfere in any way, from any angle, with the view of Arlington.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And it's generally approved by the Fine Arts Commission, and the Budget Office, and the National Capital Park and Planning Commission; so apparently -- I don't know how happy they are -- but at least they are together.

MR. GODWIN: Does that take into consideration traffic?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Other things that -- building service?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It is believed that that can be handled with 20,000 but not with 40,000.

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Mr. Ambassador, can you tell us --- (loud and prolonged laughter)

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Can you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Call me Governor for short. (more loud laughter)

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Can you tell us whether any reply has gone forward to the Japanese Prime Minister?

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to get any information from the State Department.

Q Mr. President, did you know before you went away what the mysterious Russians were coming here for?

THE PRESIDENT: That is one reason I said at the beginning that I hadn't been here long enough to find out. I didn't find out.

Q Is there any chance of having the Moscow conference in Washington?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think that would be a very silly question.

(laughter)

Q Mr. President, getting back to the War Department a minute, does that mean that you have abandoned, or are adhering to your hopes about the great records building?

THE PRESIDENT: No. This we hope will be the records building at the end of the emergency. And we are all agreed -- I talked to Congressman Woodrum about it this morning -- and he agrees heartily that we should continue to finish out this northwest -- what is it? -- quadrangle -- triangle -- whichever it is; --
(interposing)

Q /Rectangle.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) -- and keep the War Department building at least to the original size, and possibly a little bigger, so that the War Department, after the emergency is over, can return to it; and the pentagonal building can be used for records.

Q Will this new building require the full \$35,000,000? Do you expect ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hope not.

Q Mr. President, can you discuss details such as salary, or status, of the various members of the S.P.A.B.? (Supply Priorities and Allocations Board)

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think so. There has been a statement given out the other day, and there was a conference held with members of the press who were here at the time.

Q Mr. President, in your speech yesterday you said it would be necessary to step up the total of production.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) I wonder if you would expand on that a little, and tell us

how you propose to go about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I propose to spend more money and turn out more products.

It ought to be done --

Q (interposing) How much more money, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) -- for national safety.

Well, I am not ready to send my Message to Congress yet.

Q How soon?

THE PRESIDENT: Anon, -- (he laughs) --
(interposing)

MR. GODWIN: /Mr. President, this question arises ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) -- which means soon; and soon means any time between
now and the first of January. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Can they speed up by spending money that they have? I understand that about half of that money has been appropriated -- say fifty million dollars. Has it already been spent or allocated?

THE PRESIDENT: Nearly all has been allocated.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And the orders have gone out on a good deal -- good deal more than half, and of course probably in the course of the next -- what? -- sixty or ninety days, orders will be given out for the balance of it.

MR. GODWIN: May I continue that question then, sir? A lot of that money, I believe, was spent, or would be spent -- planned for factories -- larger facilities for manufacturing. Well now, have they reached the point where the new factories can increase the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It works both ways. You can't say that all of the monies are used that way. Some of it will. And a larger proportion, as I understand it now from O.P.M., War and Navy -- a larger

proportion than originally intended is going to be devoted to the use of old factories, instead of building new ones.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Uh huh.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Because it was perfectly correct, we were not distributing our efforts efficiently with the smaller people, and they have been at work on that for the last month or two, and especially in view of the fact that because of priorities there will be a good many plants all through the country that will have to stop making certain things for purely civilian use. And they are trying to use those factories and convert them into defense products.

MR. GODWIN: Will this speeding-up include any longer working hours?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no. You mean not any more than the constant addition to the second and the third shifts. That is going on all the time.

Q Mr. President, also in connection with your speech yesterday, you said something about making greater efforts to protect shipments. Can you tell us what you had in mind there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. There isn't any news on that. It means what it says; that's all.

MR. PAUL LEACH: Mr. President, have you had a survey made, or have you seen one, relative to using two and three shifts in existing plants, where now only one or two shifts are working?

THE PRESIDENT: What you mean, Paul, you mean ---

MR. PAUL LEACH: (interposing) Er -- using machines?

THE PRESIDENT: We are trying to increase the second shift. For example: You take a Navy Yard. As you know, the first shift -- the first shift -- this is an old story that I talked about three or four weeks ago -- is about 80% of the total, the second shift is about 15%, and

the third about 5%. I talked to Frank Knox about it, and we are trying to build up on this second shift until we get about 35% of the total people employed. That means of course that many more men employed. The question is largely one of materials coming along fast enough from the raw material people. We hope to get a ratio of about 60% first shift -- I am not talking about all industries, because they vary -- but 30% second shift, and about third -- 10% third shift.

MR. P. LEACH: That's all on Government-operated plants?

THE PRESIDENT: Same thing would apply to all the others too.

MR. P. LEACH: Do you expect to get that ratio in getting material?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. From the plants -- from them to the point.

Q Mr. President, you said in your speech yesterday that we shall have to do everything in our power to defeat Hitlerism. Could you define 'everything' more?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. It speaks for itself.

Q Mr. President, do you -- speaking about spending more money, can you give us any idea now on the Lend-Lease ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not yet. I am working on it, and I will probably have something by -- oh -- the end of the week, or about next Monday or Tuesday.

Q That will come first -- first Lend-Lease and later the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

Q This new request, Mr. President, the new Message -- will that be for the current fiscal year or to carry on in the next fiscal year?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea.

Q In other words, are we spending ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It will be available just as fast as it is

possible to place it. If it will be called again -- what? -- a general appropriation bill, or whether it will be called a deficiency -- I don't know.

Q In other words, there won't be any calendar -- er -- hedge on it. In other words ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q It will be spent as it can be spent?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes. Just as fast as it can be placed.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #767,
Executive Offices of the President,
September 5, 1941 -- 10.55 A.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) Well, Judge, how are you this morning?

MR. GODWIN: Very good, Squire.

(pause here) (Captain John Beardall confers very briefly with
the President)

MR. GODWIN: Did you read what Guy Mason said about the budget?

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

You will all be asking about the attack of yesterday, so we might
as well clear that up first.

There is nothing to add, except that there was more than one at-
tack, and that it occurred in daylight, and it occurred definitely on
the American side of the ocean. The -- er -- this time there is nothing
more to add except two thoughts I have. I heard one or two broadcasters
this morning, and I read a few things that have been said by people in
Washington, which reminded me of a -- perhaps we might call it an alle-
gory.

Once upon a time, at a place I was living at, there were some
school-children living out in the country who were on their way to
school, and somebody undisclosed fired a number of shots at them from
the bushes. The father of the children took the position that there
wasn't anything to do about it -- search the bushes, and take any other
steps -- because the children hadn't been hit. I don't think that's a
bad illustration, in regard to the position of some people this morning.

The destroyer -- it is a very, very fortunate thing that the de-

stroyer was not hit in these attacks. And I think that is all that can be said on the subject today.

Q Mr. President, there is one thing that occurred to me, and I wondered if you could clear that up: Was the identification of our ship solely by that little flag astern, or were there other ships going with this destroyer? Were there larger ships that made identification much easier?

THE PRESIDENT: She was alone at the time, clearly marked. Er -- of course an identification number on her, plus the flag. And the fact remains that, as I said before, there was more than one attack.

Q Uh huh.

Q Mr. President, does that mean more than one torpedo, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) More than one attack.

Q On the same ship, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: On the same ship.

MR. GODWIN: From the same ship?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: On the same ship?

Q Is there anything to account, sir, for the bad aim? Any naval explanation of that? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That is -- that question is a little bit beyond my power to answer.

Q Mr. President, one of the papers said this morning that some unidentified person in the Navy Department had said this was approximately 150 miles west of Iceland. Is that correct?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't give you the exact position at this time.

MR. GODWIN: What did you say, sir, about being on the -- you said on the American side of the ocean?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Plainly on the American side?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You said, plainly on the American side?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. GODWIN: As one landlubber to a sea expert, is it at all possible for a submarine commander to make a mistake of identification in broad daylight at that torpedo distance? Do you care to answer that?

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I suppose it could be put this way: If the -- this is from -- just plain layman's language -- pretty common sense -- if a submarine had its periscope up above the surface, do you see, there is no excuse for -- er -- the wrong identification. And, of course, most torpedoes are fired from a visual sight of the objective. That means you have got to have your periscope up above the surface. There is, of course, another way: As you know, every -- almost all Navy ships -- German included -- or Italian -- have listening devices, and they can hear the propellers, or machinery, of the other ships at some distance. Therefore, it is physically possible for a submarine to fire at a sound.

MR. GODWIN: Well, is it accurate?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course it isn't nearly as accurate as if you see what you are shooting at.

MR. GODWIN: I see.

Q Mr. President, how would you class this incident with regard to a shooting war?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, well, those are hypothetical questions. I said that was all there was to be said about it.

Q As another landlubber, I would like to ask a question here. Is it possible for a destroyer to be on the American side of the Atlantic, and still be within the zone delineated by Mr. Hitler as a belligerent zone?

THE PRESIDENT: Such a zone -- of course, in the first place, we have never been notified of it, and in the second place it was said to be a blockade. Well, of course, everybody knows that a blockade is never recognized unless it is effective.

Q Mr. President, could you say whether in -- whether the GREER in -- er -- promptly firing back, or promptly counter-attacking, behaved in accordance with its instructions -- in accordance with our policy?

THE PRESIDENT: Any information to the contrary ---. What would you do if somebody fired a torpedo at you? (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, can you say whether there was more than one attacker?

THE PRESIDENT: More than one attack, I said.

Q Mr. President, was the periscope above the water in this case?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Was the periscope above the water in this case?

THE PRESIDENT: That I can't talk about at the present time. It makes no difference if it was below that they fired at an unknown ship. If it was below the water and they fired at an unknown ship, we would make every effort to discover the identity of the ship. Well, what would you do, again?

Q Mr. President, is any search of bushes being made out there?

THE PRESIDENT: Any what?

MR. GODWIN: Search of bushes?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Yes?

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, I don't go along with the father of those children.

Q Mr. President, can you say at this time ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You might almost say that the schoolteacher is searching the bushes.

MR. GODWIN: Who is he?

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Even where a father wouldn't.

Q Mr. President, can you say at this time whether any alteration has been made in orders to the Naval vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q You can't say, or it hasn't been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Nothing's been done.

Q Going back to this occurrence at sea. At one time, if a vessel was attacked they were going to tell poppa. They don't do that any more.

THE PRESIDENT: I know it. Isn't that a funny thing? (laughter)

Q They don't wait for the parent to say, "Go ahead, boys."

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. Poppa only gets -- I mean the schoolteacher only gets burnt on -- oh, what is it? -- Tuesday evening and Friday morning. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, what is the schoolteacher going to do if they find this marauder? What can be done? Seriously, can you discuss that?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose eliminate him. Try to.

MR. GODWIN: That's the idea.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) 'Eliminate' is a reasonably good word.

MISS MAY CRAIG: I am confused as to who is the schoolteacher.

THE PRESIDENT: I am the schoolteacher. Call poppa some of these people that are saying, "Forget it. The children were not hit."

MISS MAY CRAIG: Well, originally, they were telling poppa though.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Well, I guess you will have to work it out for yourself.

Q One transformation -- poppa has become the schoolteacher.

Q Mr. President, on the basis of information you have -- er -- are there any grounds for diplomatic action in the case?

THE PRESIDENT: I told you I had nothing further to say on it today. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, some of us have had the opportunity of seeing how these forces operate with a convoy. Er -- this -- this incident, does it change in any respect the way we have been operating for some weeks?

THE PRESIDENT: Not at the present time.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, can the -- what the Commander of the GREER saw in the way of a torpedo wake, and if he saw the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I told you I can't go into details at this time any further.

MR. GODWIN: Shall I stop? You know what I am going to ask you?

Q Mr. President, what were the conditions of light?

THE PRESIDENT: Daylight.

Q Good daylight?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes.

Q No fog?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q No fog?

THE PRESIDENT: Good visibility. Put it that way.

MR. GODWIN: How about it?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Now, let's see, what else have we got? Oh, yes, here's one thing I want to talk to you about, because I think it's a pretty good illustration.

You remember -- oh, what was it? -- several months ago. I suppose we had better make this off the record entirely, not even background, because it is something between us.

Several months ago, the MALAYA came into New York harbor on Sunday morning, in broad daylight. Well, Frank Knox was talking to some of you over at the Department about not publishing ship movements, and -- er -- they did a stupid thing in having the MALAYA come in, and five million people see it. And there were certain newspapers in this country who said, "Why -- why should we live up to the request of the Secretary of the Navy about ship movements? Everybody knows it -- a lot of people see ships moving around."

And -- er -- well, it was explained very carefully at that time that if there were German spies in this country, and everything is published in the newspapers, all the 'head fellow' has to do is to sit at his desk and read all about everything from the papers. He doesn't have to hire anybody. He gets the whole thing right there. In other words, all he is is a clipping bureau. And he is able to send the information at no cost -- er -- which he gets through the American press.

Well, we all understood that at that time. And since that particular episode, there have been a lot of British, and some Canadian, and some

other ships that have come in here for repairs, and the press has been just one thousand per cent about it -- good about it. They have been perfectly fine in not listing these ships.

Well, everybody -- we all knew that the ILLUSTRIOUS was down at Norfolk, and we didn't say a word about it, except a few -- one or two types of papers -- er -- until -- er -- this young fellow -- what was his name? -- Mountbatten, went down the other day, and the Navy Department said it was perfectly all right so long as it was -- er -- general knowledge for several months, to mention the fact that the ILLUSTRIOUS is at Norfolk.

Now, when it comes down to the other question of -- the -- er -- turn-out of certain supplies, like planes -- er -- if we give out a monthly statement, the German fellow behind the desk can get it all from the paper. And as you know, we have given it out through the O.P.M. on planes, but we haven't given out -- what? -- other -- er -- figures on things like -- like depth charges, and machine guns, and so forth and so on. It has been pretty well kept.

The other -- yesterday I had a very interesting talk with the Attorney General, and Edgar Hoover, and he showed me -- I have it in my hand -- some German information -- that is to say it's a German request of some of the German agents in this country, showing that things that you and I know about, are still not in the possession of the German government, except through very careful search -- in other words, the hiring of spies to find out what the production is, and where it's going.

Er -- they have sent out certain requests to their agents in this company -- country -- asking for -- er -- a breakdown of the total

number of airplanes produced during a given month; how many are this type of pursuit plane; how many are that type; how many this type of bomber; how many the other type of bomber; how many are training planes. And then a second series of questions sent to all their agents: Where are they going? What is the destination of these planes? Is it American Army? Is it Great Britain? Is it Canada? Is it Africa? Is it Near East? Is it the Far East? They all want to know.

And from our point of view, I think we all recognize that if we hand out all this information every month, not only planes but tanks, and so forth and so on, it makes the German information task vastly easier. And that is why the question is an important one. It helps Germany, if we give out all the details and figures.

Now I am not shutting down on certain totals at this time, but the question is going to arise as soon as we know that -- er -- published yesterday -- that -- er -- the increase in planes during the month of August was about -- what was it? -- 390?

MR. GODWIN: 394.

THE PRESIDENT: 394 -- four hundred planes more than the previous month.

Now there are a lot of people who know they can get the stuff around, fairly well, to the breakdown. You can probably -- by snooping around in a perfectly legitimate way -- get that breakdown, find out how many planes there were of different types -- er -- how many training planes; how many big bombers; how many small bombers, etc. And if it is published it is going to be of definite aid to the Axis powers.

Now, there is no particular reason why those figures -- I suppose we ought to, when it comes to the question -- the question of appropriation bills -- we ask for more money -- why those figures could

not properly be given to the Committees of the Congress, with the understanding that they will not be made public.

Now, off the record -- er -- that is rather a difficult job, but -- (he laughs) -- nevertheless, there are certain -- the Legislative branch of the Government is entitled to certain information in making -- working out new appropriations, and if there is any leak from up there, well, it certainly isn't the fault of the Administrative branch of the Government.

Neither would it be the fault of the press, if the press did not publish it, and that is why I am going to -- er -- just throw out the suggestion at this time -- without anything like a formal request, the suggestion that we consider pretty carefully publishing in the press, figures of production in this country, on the ground that it would be definitely of aid to the Axis powers. Er -- O.P.M.'s been giving that out. I think probably that the Army ought not to give out any statement about tanks. Actually, and again off the record, the number of tanks produced this past month has shown a very, very great rise over the figure of -- er -- the previous month, and the month before that. I think it's a mistake to aid the Axis powers by giving the actual figures.

MR. FRANK KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, could I ask a question while we are off the record? I would like to get your opinion on this, because it has been advanced by Senator Byrd and other people, that hold that it is more important to drag this -- any deficiency, out in the open, at this stage of procedure, and get it corrected, than it is to keep that kind of information, at this stage, from the Germans. Have you -- what is your idea on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think probably that in those cases -- er -- the deficiencies -- er -- you must depend in the first instance on going to the Departments concerned to get their figures. In other words, being -- being accurate in the first instance, getting the real, actual facts.

And that is why -- I am talking -- I am still off the record -- we are talking about -- er -- improving our information service in two lines. First, through the public, and secondly for Members of the House, and Members of the Senate, so that instead of going to one man, or another man, and getting figures that are based on different facts, different methods -- as you always can -- that they will get something absolutely authoritative from a bureau of the Government and -- probably would be Lowell Mellett's Bureau -- which would -- er -- get the figures that everybody could agree on.

If you go around -- I have often used the example -- an airplane may come out of a factory, complete so far as that factory is concerned. Now, some Agency of the Government may very easily -- er -- in -- put that down as a completed plane. All right. Now, suppose there are two other steps. The factory doesn't put the artillery on the plane, and the plane may sit there without any guns. Well, the fellow that is doing the gun work, as soon as he gets the guns on to that plane, he will call it a completed plane. And then there is the navigational instrument fellow, and he will, just as soon as he gets his navigational instruments on the plane -- he will say the plane's completed. But, suppose the plane hadn't got any propeller? Now, as soon as the propeller fellow in charge of that has got a propeller on the plane, he calls it complete.

In other words, we have got to have a -- er -- a basis to go on, a criterion as to what is a completed plane. And that is why you can get all kinds of different figures, whether you are a Member of the Senate or a Member of the Press. And what we are trying to do now is standardize it, and lay down rules as to what is a completed plane. Well, that has never been done. I think it will help everybody.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, is there some -- some way of figuring a standard of measurement on these things? After all, I think the people, certainly the editors and readers, are interested in the comparison.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) They don't remember from one week to another how many planes were produced, but they do want to know about any progress.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Have you been able to work out either a horse-power or gun-power method, in order to show progress, and still not disclose the type of plane? Or would it be possible that -- after this information is -- er -- known to all, to make it public? We have to guess at figures on bombers because that seems to be the great interest. How many of these planes are trainers which come off like Chevrolets; and how many come off like bombers, which are Rolls Royces?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, that's the information the Germans are crazy to get.

Q I was just wondering ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) If we could get the thing explained to the American people -- I suppose next month I will go on the air and explain

it to the American people in a single word.

Let me give you an example: A year ago there was a certain -- er -- figure that we hoped we would get -- had hope we would reach -- in other words a line going on up -- constantly increased production. Well, those were totals. Let us say, for example, that instead of putting it in total of airplanes, you put it in total of man-hours. Now, that's a much more important thing, and sufficiently difficult to explain, and made infinitely more difficult to explain because there are a whole lot of people -- columnists, and so forth -- who would want deliberately to leave that end of it out in what they are telling the American people.

If you have last year's figures that was based on -- well, it was considering military needs of the time, and the great bulk of the planes were pursuit planes of the -- fighter planes. All right. In the last three or four months all the military authorities here, and on the other side, and our observers said, "You are making too many pursuit planes and not enough bombers." Right.

Now a bomber must take some figure -- it is not a correct figure because I don't know what the -- the figure is, but a bomber takes, let us say, three times as many man-hours to turn out as a pursuit plane. Therefore, Q.E.D., if you have the same number of man-hours, you will turn out only one third in bombers as you would have turned out in pursuit planes. Therefore, it throws last year's figures, I suppose, into the discard.

Now, we are increasing, of course, on our bomber output, but it is only in the last five months that we have been changing over, and that -- there is a certain lag on that change-over, of course. You

can't simply issue an order Monday and have it start on Tuesday. We are not making as many pursuit planes. We are making more bombers, but with the same number of man-hours.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think people will be able to understand that.

Q Mr. President, I think you agree we are up against the problem ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh sure.

Q (continuing) For instance, it may be charged in defense production, that if we can't run these figures, we are using -- adopting a partisan attitude on it. There is a problem there. Do you agree, sir, on the figures, how difficult it is?

THE PRESIDENT: I do. It's a real problem. You see, I am not asking anything special, except that you recognize that there is a problem.

MR. GODWIN: May we go on the record, sir, now?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: May we go on the record? The Baruch matter -- have you anything to say about his visit here with you?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I heard that there were various versions in various papers. There were certainly -- some of the versions of what he said didn't at all conform to what we said.

MR. GODWIN: Would you care to correct them?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask another question? There is a story of oil and other supplies being shipped somewhere -- to Spain. Do you know anything about that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Hadn't heard of it at all. You had better check with -- I don't know who -- State Department.

MR. D. CORNELL: Mr. President, is -- are the Free French eligible for Lend-Lease assistance?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask the State Department that question, because they will reply to it in State Department language.

MR. D. CORNELL: That's what I am afraid of. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, we are getting reports from some of our cable sources that Mr. Sayre of the Philippines is about to be replaced, or will be replaced as head of the Commission by Mr. Henry Grady. Do you have such a plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it, although, of course, stories of that kind started two days after Sayre got there. I think -- what? -- three years ago.

Q Mr. President, a while ago, in connection with what might be done to the attacker of the GREER, you used the word 'eliminate'. Can we quote that one word?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: (loudly) (among other loud voices) Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #768,
Executive Offices of the President,
September 16, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M., E.S.T.

(Press Conferences for the 9th and 12th were not held,
due to the passing of the President's mother)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything, except a rather minor matter,
as far as it goes, but it is just an instance of how we are trying to
-- er -- work towards the cutting of red tape, and speeding things up
on the administration of the Lend-Lease Bill.

We made a survey about two weeks ago, showing that it is taking
too long a time between the -- er -- a preliminary application on the
part of the -- er -- er -- people who want the aid from Lend-Lease --
the Chinese or the British -- er -- to get final action. It was tak-
ing 25 or 30 days before they could get final clearance, so we started
in and cut down on the length of time that the papers stayed in the
various Bureaus they had to go through, under the law. And we cut it
down to about 16 days.

And in a further effort to cut the time, I decided that there was
about a twenty-four hour delay in the whole thing -- out of the whole
thing -- in the White House itself. In other words, every day, I have
been signing these books, and I suppose the average book called for 20
different signatures on my part. And they would come in the late after-
noon, around five o'clock, and I would sign them and they wouldn't get
back -- er -- to the -- er -- Lend-Lease people until the following
afternoon; and there was a twenty-four hour delay which we didn't think

was necessary. And under the law I have power to delegate those actual signatures and get a report of what has been approved -- er -- by my agent, once a week.

So I have sent a letter to Ed Stettinius (Edward R. Stettinius, Jr., Chairman, Priorities Board) -- er -- saying that I had appointed him as Special Assistant, to act as Administrator of the Lend-Lease program, and this will give him general supervision and control over the program -- er -- as carried out by the Executive Officer, and his Executive Officer of the Division of Defense Aid Reports. In other words, General Burns -- is the easiest way of putting it -- and his staff; which means that Ed from now on will sign all these papers every day, instead of my having to sign them.

We will save 24 hours. It's not much saving, but some saving.

And he will make a report of what has been authorized once a week.

Q Why only a 15-day saving?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Why only a 15-day saving?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if you knew the places it had to go, you would think that was pretty good.

Q Is there any way of cutting down those places?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there any way of cutting down those places?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Probably not below that.

MR. GODWIN: What was the book that you said you signed?

THE PRESIDENT: It's the authorization -- er -- I had to sign two letters for each one -- one to General Burns, and the other is to the Treasury, for certain items.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And each one required two signatures on my part.

MR. GODWIN: Yes. That is under the law?

THE PRESIDENT: All kinds of items. There are literally hundreds of different kinds of items.

MR. GODWIN: Under the law?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. But it was under the law I can delegate those signatures to Stettinius.

MR. GODWIN: Stettinius pinch-hits for you on this thing and saves a day, is that the idea?

Q Mr. President, are you going to take any -- make any suggestion that the British speed up their signatures? The story is it takes them about 70 signatures to get a requisition over here.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think it is pretty good. It all has to be dove-tailed into our program. And incidentally, if some question arises here, it has to be cabled back to the other side. That is -- it creates an almost inevitable delay.

Q Mr. President, a number of editorial writers and columnists who support your foreign policy found the Lend-Lease report yesterday disappointing in the totals of aid actually shipped. Do you think that is a fair interpretation?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because ninety-nine and nine-tenths of the articles cannot be purchased on the shelves of a department store. They have to be ordered and manufactured.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, continuing that -- last night, news from London quoted -- I think it quoted Averell Harriman as saying that there would be -- I think he said a doubling of output. Is there some basis not

now in existence? It gave me the impression that he meant more factories would be up -- something that would increase the output.

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't see the article, and I would hesitate to give any figure of anything like doubling. But, of course, it is true that there will be a whole lot of factories which will go into full production during the course of this autumn, which were started -- authorized by Congress at the beginning of the year, and have been building and we have been tooling them for the past eight or ten months; and they are now going into production.

Q Mr. President, in your speech, you disclosed that we had outposts in Labrador. I think that was new. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Mr. President, could you tell us whether convoys figure in protection which the American Navy is now giving to ships on the American side of the Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that what I said covers it sufficiently.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) Amateur strategists should not think that there is only one method of protection.

MR. D. CORNELL: Mr. President, will there continue to be announcements of sinkings or attacks on American-owned vessels?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It will depend on the military situation.

MR. D. CORNELL: Will there be announcements if there are any encounters between our naval ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It will depend on the naval situation.

Q Mr. President, you have been known for some years as a very enthusiastic motion picture fan. Have you been impressed with the dangers of war

propaganda in motion pictures lately? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I have not. (he laughs)

Q There has been quite a hullabaloo about it.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Do you care to comment on the hullabaloo about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I saw Berryman's cartoon in tonight's Star. I think it's worth reprinting. It's rather -- rather good. Are you familiar with that? (holding up copy of The Evening Star showing Jim Berryman's cartoon on the front page)

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Yesterday's? Is that today's?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) A picture of Charlie Chaplin. And he is standing in very much the old Charlie Chaplin attitude, holding a subpoena to appear before the Senate Committee investigating motion picture propaganda, and Charlie is saying, "Now, I -- now what could I possibly tell those past masters about comedy?" (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I have got another one. I don't know whether it should be off the record or not.

MR. EARLY: The address should. (be off the record)

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: The address should.

THE PRESIDENT: No. The man who wrote it. How about the fellow who got it?

MR. EARLY: I wouldn't tell them.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: I wouldn't tell them his name.

THE PRESIDENT: It is to a Senator -- there are 96 of them, so that's perfectly safe.

MR. GODWIN: What State? (laughter)

MR. EARLY: (softly) Connecticut.

THE PRESIDENT: The date is September 10. It is addressed to Senator So and
So, Washington, D. C.:

"Have just been reading book called Holy Bible. Has large circulation in this country. Written entirely by foreign-born, mostly Jews. First part full of war-mongering propaganda. Second part condemns Isolationism, with faked story about Samaritan. Dangerous. Should be added to your list and suppressed."

(laughter)

VOICE: Marvelous!

Q Mr. President, would you care ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Could you tell us whom it is from?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. Steve says I can't.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say about this proposal to
bring back part of Arlington County into the District of Columbia?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q In connection with that war propaganda in the movies, there have been charges made that the Government has exerted pressure on them to make and distribute war propaganda films.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, the -- "Government" is a pretty broad word. The Head of the Administrative government has not.

Q Mr. President, you did say that there was more than one way of protecting ships. Many people have said that the STEEL SEAFARER would not have been sunk, and many of our other merchant ships would be much safer if they were armed. Do you think that is true?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- I don't think there is any news on that today at all.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Will you be asking soon for any change in the Neutrality

Act at this time?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any news on that either.

MR. ALFRED STEDMAN: Mr. President, with regard to the debate on foreign policy, some question is raised as to whether Republicans, who are strong supporters of the Administration's foreign policy would be opposed by Democratic candidates supported by the Administration, next year?

THE PRESIDENT: Only one general answer -- why drag party problems, or party questions into this picture of danger to the United States at this time? Either people who do the dragging, people on the Hill, or people down at this end of the Avenue, or newspapers or radio commentators or would-be candidates, or anybody else. I think it applies to us all.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the tax bill in its final form?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I haven't had a chance to see the final form.

Q Mr. President, in your discussion with Mr. Davis (William H. Davis, Nat. Def. Mediation Board) this morning, did the question of the so-called maintenance clause come up at the Kearny Shipbuilding conference?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Has that clause been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got the faintest idea. You would have to ask somebody else.

Q There are reports of Axis sea-raiders near the Panama Canal. Can you comment about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Wouldn't if I could.

Q Mr. President, does the Red Sea fit into the defensive waters of the United States?

THE PRESIDENT: No -- no news on that today.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: (to the President) What about the gorilla?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: The gorilla?

MR. EARLY: (interposing) Didn't get time for it, Earl.

PRESS CONFERENCE #769,
Held in the Library of the President's Home
in Hyde Park, New York
September 19, 1941 -- 11.30 A.M., E.D.T.

VOICE: Grand weather!

THE PRESIDENT: Isn't it grand?

There isn't any use of your coming out, you fellows, except the fresh air is good for you. I think that's the only object in you boys coming out today.

I am trying to get out -- who is that over in the corner? -- Ann? (Ann Gillis of C.B.S.) Er -- I am trying to get out some more -- I have been doing it now for a couple of months -- the Navy books. They are more or less scattered all over the house, and they go down from here -- Tommy (Tom Qualters) packs them to go to Washington. They get the cards from the card index put in, and then they go to the Archives -- into the lethal chamber -- where they are gassed, and then they are sent up here to Mr. Shipman, who puts his people to work putting them away in their proper places, and get them -- the catalog -- to conform with the rest of his catalog. (To Mr. Shipman) How is the attendance holding up?

MR. SHIPMAN: Fairly well, Mr. President. The average has been, since Labor Day, about 180.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Good.

MR. SHIPMAN: (continuing) This time of year it is very good.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Fine.

MR. SHIPMAN: (continuing) We will have about 4,000, including the attendance on Labor Day.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Uh huh.

MR. SHIPMAN: (continuing) Well, it's too early, of course, to make any estimate for the fiscal year, but during the months of July and August we had an average of about 10,000 a month. Of course that will slow up during the winter, and will begin again in the spring, so that it will probably run -- total paid attendance -- if the same figures can continue, somewhere around 80,000 people the first year. And of course, a lot of other people free -- schoolchildren.

Q And newspapermen?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Newspapermen?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You can go in any time at all.

MR. GEORGE DURNO: Free, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Shipman, take a look at him, his name is Durno, and he is called 'Dean' of all the boys, you see, and he gets in free.

MR. SHIPMAN: He gets in free? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: All right, George. That includes Durno and lady.

MR. SHIPMAN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: That doesn't include more than one, though. (laughter)

I don't think I have got any news at all.

Q Mr. President, was this report that was published in Lord Beaverbrook's paper this morning about the American Navy destroying a raider -- was there any basis in fact on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't say anything about it, one way or the other. Now, that -- that is for the record.

Now I will tell you off the record. Mind you, this is off the record. We have absolutely no information whatsoever, at least we didn't up till last night. Never heard of it. But, if I were to say yes or

no, do you see, to your original question, "Was there any truth in it?" -- there might have been a raider destroyed far out to sea they never heard about. So if I said "No," I would be denying what Lord Beaverbrook had printed, and I can't say "No" because I never heard of it. So you see the dilemma I am in on that kind of a thing.

Literally, absolutely -- and this has got to be off the record -- there isn't -- there isn't a -- any information whatsoever, so Stark told me yesterday afternoon.

Q Could you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) All I can say is -- can't say anything about it.

Q It -- er -- may cause a little confusion.

THE PRESIDENT: I know. That's the difficulty about these things.

Q (interposing) There was some ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) On the question of odds, the chances are that it's ten to one there hasn't been a raider seen or destroyed. But there is just the one chance in ten that one was. We haven't heard about it, so what do we do?

Q Our officials were pointing out ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I know.

Q (continuing) -- in your press conference statement that you would not say whether any announcement should be made should a raider be destroyed, and later on Secretary Knox who said should a raider be destroyed we will tell the world ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It's a question of timing. Still off the record. Of course it will come out, should we get a report. Suppose we have no reports -- but suppose we should get a report next week that a raider had been destroyed. Well, there might be reason for us to

hold up that story for a week. Maybe we would find a rendezvous with another raider somewhere, or an oil ship. Obviously, the thing to do would be to keep quiet about the rendezvous ourselves. Now there are all kinds of things that can happen in operations of this kind. You will get it all right, but we have got to say when.

Q During the last war, weren't sinkings held up -- submarines in particular?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh my, yes.

Q For military reasons?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q They didn't know what was happening?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q In fact, I think they had a strike on ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In Germany.

Q In Kiel.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, have you seen any of this printed talk about whether there will be elections in 1942?

THE PRESIDENT: On what? Let us see. This is the only thing I can say. I hadn't -- er -- seen it, but I guess I had better answer it off the record. (laughter) That this is still summer, until the 21st, which is day after tomorrow. Therefore, this is still a solstice. (laughter)

Q That is off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: That is off the record.

Q I have an inquiry, Mr. President, as to what you talked about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What you call heat madness. (laughter)

Q It's nice and cool here.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but it did not originate here. (laughter)

Q I said the subject of your conversation with Chief of Police Kelly in Washington. They would like to know if there is anything particular ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I will tell you what the only thing we talked about was. I was very glad to find that he is a very old friend of Valentine's in New York -- Police Commissioner -- and he is going to talk with their Police Chief Valentine, and others, in regard to the whole traffic problem in Washington, which is a serious one, and there is no other city with the same kind of a problem as Washington, D. C. And he told me he was very anxious to help improve things, and is going to talk with Traffic Departments of other cities.

Q Are you referring, sir, to the rush-hour traffic situation, when you say that?

THE PRESIDENT: Partly that, and partly -- I won't say bad driving, but it probably will improve the standard of driving. (he laughs)

MR. J. EMSLEY: Mr. President, the munitions manufacturing company down below Poughkeepsie, you know, seems to be making good progress.

THE PRESIDENT: What is it, the old ---

MR. J. EMSLEY: (interposing) That's the old Delapenha plant.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes.

MR. J. EMSLEY: They seem to be making very good progress. And Mr. Hart, the president, told me this week that they were going to expand further and that -- er -- apparently the Government had assigned them some more orders that were not anticipated previously.

THE PRESIDENT: Are they producing yet?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Well, in a very limited way. Of course they had to get the job set up, and after all they only took over the property in April, and they are making very good progress.

THE PRESIDENT: What are they making?

MR. J. EMSLEY: They are going to make aircraft cannon.

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh.

MR. J. EMSLEY: (continuing) And they have on hand this raw material -- barrel stock largely, and they have a good many machine tools set up in the old plant, which used to be the old factory plant.

THE PRESIDENT: They are not doing the forgings?

MR. J. EMSLEY: No.

THE PRESIDENT: They make the rough barrel?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And machine it?

MR. J. EMSLEY: Yes, and -- er -- they are going -- as I understand it, however, they are going to examine the old unit because they are planning these test pits -- test tunnels, and -- er -- I thought it was interesting. And everybody here is pleased.

THE PRESIDENT: I will drive down and see it, sometime.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Are you going to be here long this time?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Probably only to Sunday or Monday. I don't know which.

MR. J. EMSLEY: You probably would not get down this week?

MR. DURNO: Mr. President, you brought the tax bill up with you?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, I brought it up.

MR. G. DURNO: Are you going to act on it today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. It depends on whether I get time enough to go through the bill itself, and also go through the various analyses of the bill that have come from the Treasury Department.

MR. G. DURNO: Isn't there some -- er -- hurry about signing it?

THE PRESIDENT: Very little. Nearly -- a very large part of it applies to

the -- the much greater part of it applies, of course, to the fiscal year and all the corporate taxes and the others. There are two or three things -- er -- which apply as of October -- I think it's October first.

Q That's right.

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: In other words, holding it up a couple of days won't cost the Government anything.

Q They have been using a figure -- er -- of three million dollars a day.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, no. How could they possibly get that?

Q There are no taxes ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I only got it yesterday afternoon. I think I am entitled to 48 hours to read it. If you ever saw it, you would think that was pretty good speed. (laughter)

Q There are no taxes that are effective immediately upon your signature in the bill?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, the inheritance tax.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, has the time come when you can tell us anything about the conversations -- the discussions that have been going on about Japan with Admiral Nomura?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I can't tell you anything about it.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Can you tell us anything about the nature of your discussions in the last few days with Mr. Hull?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We see each other, or telephone almost every day, you might say. As you know, when I am up here, I talk to him every day on the telephone.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: You saw Secretary Hull and Admiral Stark together?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but that was a coincidence. Stark and Nimitz came in, and I kept Stark over.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Mr. President, just one other thing: In Poughkeepsie -- Dutchess County -- there seems to be some want of, and a scattered arrangement of housing these various volunteer defense committees, etc. Er -- and there are a good many women too who are interested, as well as the defense councils. And I wondered whether, just as a matter of suggestion, whether the -- whether you might think that the old Post Office building would serve as a temporary central setup for that part of it, and do you think that is a good idea, or not?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would have to see, first of all, whether -- whether the people here -- the defense people -- wanted it.

MR. J. EMSLEY: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (Continuing) If they did want it, send me an application for use of it, and I will send it over to the Post Office Department.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Offhand, doesn't the thing sort of sound good to you? I mean ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't see why not, but, after all they ought to have something to say about it, if they are going to live there.

MR. J. EMSLEY: Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: There is nobody in it now?

MR. J. EMSLEY: No. Of course, you know, the plan was at one time to possibly house the established Federal Agencies in this vicinity there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. J. EMSLEY: And of course you remember the Poughkeepsie situation.

THE PRESIDENT: I remember it well.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about this ship strike in New York?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't know any more than you do about it.

Q It looks like we are not going to get a story.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe there is a story.

Q Are you going to do anything about Mr. Hassett's State of Vermont going to war?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q Going to war the other day -- the State of Vermont?

Q Yes -- the State Legislature.

THE PRESIDENT: I could not say anything in Bill Hassett's presence.

Q No Neutrality Proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q No Neutrality Proclamation?

THE PRESIDENT: As between Bill Hassett and the State of Vermont, I think the situation is too delicate. (laughter)

Off the record, there's another thing: I -- I had a little bit of a problem when I was Governor of New York. I had to open -- this is off the record -- the bridge between -- over Lake -- Lake Champlain -- between New York and Vermont. And the dear, sweet old Governor of Vermont -- old man Weeks, was about 80 years old, and he was a perfect old darling. He was just as nice as he could be. And we drove over -- we met in the middle, and he held one side of a pair of scissors and I held the other side, and we cut the ribbon that opened the bridge.

I drove over to the Vermont side, and right down by the approach at the Vermont side was a very nice farm. And by way of conversation, I said, "Governor, there's a nice farm down there. It won't be very nice to live there, what with all this bridge traffic going over it." "Hmmm," he said, "they paid one thousand dollars too much for that

farm." (laughter)

He was grand. Then we came back again for the speech-making, and I put on a very serious face, and said how embarrassed I was, as Governor of New York, to have to take part in a ceremony with a large slice of the United States which had seceded years ago from the State of New York, and the State had never recognized that Vermont had seceded from the State of New York, and we did not quite know what to do.

Well, the poor old boy -- all the Vermonters saw no humor in it whatsoever -- (laughter) -- as being a little too subtle, but all my New York friends thought it was a grand joke. He was a great boy, old Weeks was. Do you remember him?

MR. HASSETT: Yes. He's still going strong.

THE PRESIDENT: Is he really? Well, he must be happy, because the bridge is paid.

Q A familiar ring in that voice.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A familiar ring in that voice.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Still Durno's turn to go to church, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Didn't he go the last time?

MR. G. DURNO: I did, and you weren't there. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: That was why the Rector reported that he got a good collection that day.

Q That's it.

MR. G. DURNO: I was the bald-headed boy in the Processional.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter)

MR. G. DURNO: (adding) And also the Recessional.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I have no idea yet. It's too early. It depends on a great many things.

Q Well, thank you, sir.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Good-bye. Good-bye.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #770,
Executive Offices of the President,
September 23, 1941 -- 4.00 P.M., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) How is the traffic situation getting on?

MR. GODWIN: Russ (John Russell Young, D.C., Commissioner) says he wants
more common sense and fewer experts.

THE PRESIDENT: Who does?

MR. GODWIN: Russ, the Senator.

THE PRESIDENT: That's all right.

MR. GODWIN: (laughing) That's his slogan.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, the real answer is: more common sense on the part
of car drivers in Washington.

MR. GODWIN: We don't care where it comes from. (he laughs)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I just got word from the Navy Department that that ship
that the State Department told you about this morning was sunk on Fri-
day last, at 23 hours and 25 minutes G.M.T. (Greenwich Mean Time) on
Friday night, which of course, if you work it out for the position of
the ship at the time, was Saturday morning, obviously. 23.25, for
those of you who don't go on a 24-hour day, means 11.25 p.m., and G.M.T.
means Zero time, or Greenwich time; which translated into the position
of the ship would be -- er -- oh, what? -- two or three hours difference
in time. I am wrong on that -- it wouldn't have been Saturday morning,
it would be early in the evening (Friday) at that time.

Q Nine o'clock.

THE PRESIDENT: The latitude was 61 (degrees) 36 (minutes) North. The longi-
tude was 35 (degrees) 07 (minutes) West. And for those of you who

haven't got maps, it was about 275 miles northeast of Cape Farewell, which is the southern tip of Greenland.

Q Northeast?

THE PRESIDENT: Yeah. Obviously it could not be Northwest, because then it would have been the other side of Greenland.

MR. GODWIN: What was that longitude?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: What was that longitude?

THE PRESIDENT: 37 (degrees) 07 (minutes). I mean -- I am wrong. 35 (degrees) 07 (minutes).

MR. GODWIN: 07?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Mr. President, any indication as to what happened to the crew?

THE PRESIDENT: No word as to whether there are any survivors or not. The only information we have is that it was a submarine attack, and the ship was in company with a Canadian-escorted convoy.

Q Was the ship bound for Britain, or for Iceland, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Iceland.

Q For Iceland?

THE PRESIDENT: Yup.

MR. GODWIN: How did you get the word on this?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I can tell you that.

Q Mr. President, was it a general cargo, or any specific cargo?

THE PRESIDENT: General cargo.

MR. KINGSBURY-SMITH: Mr. President, do you think that these ships that are being sunk so -- er -- rapidly, should be provided with some measures of self-defense?

THE PRESIDENT: That is a pending question.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, this whole thing -- if we look at it from the point of view of each little detail, aren't we rather greatly overlooking, or tending to overlook the main objective, which is national defense? And by going into the details of this, that or the other thing, aren't we drawing a 'red herring' across the objective of national defense?

It has been made perfectly clear what is happening in this world today. The world is facing the most outrageous history -- er -- the most outrageous movement in all history, literally all history of the world up to the present time -- recorded history.

A certain group of people is trying to dominate the whole world, and we are trying to defend the Americas against that attempted domination.

Congress has made it perfectly clear that a part of that defense is to try to help, in every way we can, those people who are conducting active war against this attempted domination of the world. It is part of our work. We are doing all we can to help them. And, incidentally, to prevent -- er -- the dictators from gaining footholds, or acquiring positions where they could immediately and directly threaten us. That is why we have got American troops in Iceland today. That is why we are keeping the lanes open. That is why we are trying to get stuff over to England safely, for their use -- munitions, and foodstuffs -- to keep them going in this battle.

I don't think that there is much argument that is justified -- with honesty -- in trying to obscure the main objectives, by talking

about whether the ship was in convoy, or was not; whether the ship was armed, or was not; whether the ship was carrying the Panama flag, or the United States flag. They are just 'red herrings' drawn across the trail of the main purpose of this Hemisphere. Thank you. That's all for today.

Q Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President, if you had ---
(interposing)

THE PRESIDENT:/ I said that was all for today.

MR. GODWIN: Let me make a statement in favor of it. You can always squelch a poor reporter. Er -- if it is -- if it is a matter of details, suppose we look at some of the details, isn't it easier to defend the Administration's position, and the United States, with guns on the ships than without?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it is.

MR. GODWIN: Is that a fair question?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you are right, and I think probably that we are heading toward the arming of American merchant ships, and possibly the providing of arms to the merchant ships of -- let us say -- other American nations. This particular ship (Pink Star) did carry a gun. Panama registry. American ownership.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask a question of fact? In history, on this thing, the arming of merchant ships was an ordinary affair, under the -- under international law, was it, or not? Under a plain principle of international law, but before we had the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, absolutely and clearly. Now, you take the examples that I have used of the -- of the so-called quasi-war against France in 1798. Nearly all of our merchant ships were armed, and a great many

of them, because of their armament, beat off French privateers. Same way in the War of 1812; a great many of our merchant ships were armed, and -- er -- in accordance with, as you say, international law ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- beat off the attacks of British privateers.

And there were a great many cases of -- er -- American -- er -- privately owned ships, that were armed for voyages into the Mediterranean, which beat off the attacks of Barbary Corsairs. There isn't any question about that.

Q Mr. President, assuming ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) According to present law it forbids that.

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

Q Mr. President, if we are going to arm merchant ships, we have got to amend the present Neutrality Law, that is right?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that is right.

Q Then is it going to be piecemeal repeal on that from now on, or are you going ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, that's the thing that's under consideration at the present time, but there probably won't be any decision on it until next week.

Q That's bigger than a 'red herring'?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. In other words, the problem is how much we will ask in the way of repeal.

Q Mr. President, while we are on the subject of merchant ships, have you anything to say regarding the seamen's strike? (Seafarer's International Union, A.F.L.)

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The seamen's strike?

THE PRESIDENT: The seamen's strike is being certified this afternoon by the -- er -- at the request of the Maritime Commission, and by the Department of Labor, to the National Mediation Board.

Q Mr. President, assuming that the policy in relation to this case was pretty well said in your speech a few days ago, doesn't this case only forbid adequacy of protection?

THE PRESIDENT: This particular sinking of this ship?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's just another -- another instance. In other words, we are doing everything we can to protect ships. On the -- on the -- this -- er -- shipping pool thing -- those ships -- of course it is perfectly clear that -- er -- those ships have got to move. They simply can't be kept tied up.

Q Would it be possible then, Mr. President, for the Maritime Commission to take over the majority of the merchant lines?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think we can go into that at the present time. I don't think you can go beyond the -- I don't think you can go into method or detail at the present time, but you can use the statement that I said that the ships have got to move. They can't be kept tied up because of labor disputes. And at the same time, the trouble is being referred to the National Mediation Board, to see if it can be amicably pooled.

MR. GODWIN: And the ships have got to move?

THE PRESIDENT: But the ships have got to move.

Q Mr. President, to refresh our memory, when you were in the Navy in 1917, were merchant vessels armed by a fiat of the Government, or did it go to Congress?

THE PRESIDENT: I think Congress did it, but I think also, as I remember it -- this is just recollection -- you have got to check ---

Q (interposing) No, Mr. President, there was a filibuster in 1917.

Q Filibuster.

THE PRESIDENT: No, that was a filibuster up to the 4th of March. Then, when the Special Session began, and almost immediately afterwards ---

Q (interposing) In the meantime, President Wilson said he had the power. Could he do it?

THE PRESIDENT: He did it. And more than that, I remember distinctly that beginning about the -- er -- 5th of February, when I got back from Haiti and San Domingo -- er -- with the approval of Mr. Daniels (Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy at that time) we went ahead ordering the guns with which to arm the ships.

Q Mr. President, that was between the 4th of March and the 7th of April that we went ahead with it.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Congress convened around the 5th or 6th of April.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's right.

Q Mr. President, have you already ordered the guns for arming our merchant ships?

THE PRESIDENT: The answer to that is that we are building every type of gun that is useful -- that can be used -- as fast as we can do it, under the present appropriations and orders.

Q Mr. President, from what you said, apparently Panama wants us to put some crews on those ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I -- I couldn't tell you whether there are any.

MR. GODWIN: If there are any more, how many?

THE PRESIDENT: Panamanian flag ships are either armed or being armed. You would have to find that out from somebody else.

Q Could you tell us are all the other American ships able to arm themselves if they want to, with legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Some of them would have -- er -- guns on them, and others probably have not got sufficient guns.

Q But legally, sir, can they arm?

THE PRESIDENT: Legally we can Lend-Lease the guns to them.

Q Do any of those countries have laws prohibiting the arming of ships, as we still have?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (he laughs)

Q Are you discussing with them the problem of arming their ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what type of gun this boat (Pink Star) had? Was it an anti-aircraft gun, or a gun capable of defending it from a surface raider?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, an anti-aircraft gun can fire right out straight, as well as up in the air.

Q Some are not very effective though, used against a surface vessel.

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on the distance.

Q I see.

Q Mr. President, if it will be decided next week, will it be a Message?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know that.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox said the other day that we did not have enough guns to arm our merchant ships. Is that a problem you are considering too?

THE PRESIDENT: That is -- that is true, if you count all of our merchant men.

Q Do you have enough for the ships that are engaged in that particular
run we have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I should say so.

Q (continuing) --- across the Atlantic?

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. (then to the President) Good story.

THE PRESIDENT: Good story. It's all right.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #771,
Executive Office of the President,
September 30, 1941 -- 4:10 p.m., E.S.T.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Early) Do you want to have that mimeographed for them?

MR. EARLY: Sure.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

(the President confers briefly with Mr. Early)

MR. EARLY: You announced it. It's all Lend-Lease. That's all right.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes?

This is rather an old story for headline artists, but it is -- it is quite interesting, I think. It relates to a ship that was sunk four or five days ago, and therefore it is hardly front-page stuff now, but it is still interesting.

You were asking about the cargo of the Pink Star. And what I want to emphasize is that -- er -- the ship was bound for Iceland, and then was going to put ashore, on Iceland, part of the cargo, for the population, and for the -- er -- troops in Iceland. Then was going on to -- er -- Great Britain.

But what I want to emphasize in some of these figures is what -- what it means to American defense, and the fact that it has got to be replaced. The orders have got to be -- er -- started on their way again. The material has got to be purchased, which may take some time, because we may have to wait our turn. And eventually the replaced cargo will go on its way, on -- in another ship.

Most of this cargo was food, which of course, I suppose, is contraband of war, under some rules, because the maintenance of the bodies of a nation which is fighting for its existence is rather important.

You can't eat tanks, or guns, or planes, and that was the principal part of the cargo of this ship.

For instance, she carried enough cheddar cheese, which I think is made -- it is made in a great many places in this country -- Wisconsin and others -- to feed more than three and a half million laborers for a whole week under the current British rations. This cheese on this little boat -- she was a little boat -- represented one year's milk production of more than 2,000 cows.

Then she carried powdered milk, the equivalent of more than 432,000 quarts.

She carried evaporated milk, a year's production of 300 cows. The equivalent of more than a million and a quarter quarts of fresh milk.

She carried -- er -- concentrated orange juice, enough to supply the vitamin C requirements of 91,000 individuals for 12 days.

She carried pork products, representing approximately 8,000 hogs. And she carried lard, representing the bi-product production from some 87,000 hogs.

She carried the -- she carried corn, representing the production of more than 600 acres. She carried tractors that could have ploughed up 715 acres a day, and mechanical potato diggers that could have dug up 250 acres a day.

Then she carried something -- a very small amount of what might be called military supplies. The metallic links for machine gun belts, which of course is a very small matter in bulk, but every belt has to have metallic links. Enough of those little links to arm 10 squadrons of fighter planes.

And she carried some small machine tools, enough to require the

labor of 300 workers for four months. These tools were primarily for use in making aircraft engines.

Now all of that has got to be re-ordered. As I said, some of it can be bought quickly off shelves, and other parts will have to be manufactured. Start all over again. And that shows one reason why we consider it rather necessary for our own American defense, to get things of that kind over to the people who are doing the actual fighting, which is first, of course, for their own preservation, but of almost equal importance to the defense of the United States.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I say, that's a pretty stale story; but there it is.

Q Mr. President, on this subject of ships sinking, there are rumors floating around London, and Vichy, and in several of the other capitals this afternoon, that the American ship CAESAR has been sunk near Iceland. Have you received such a report?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Never heard of it.

Q Mr. President, a question along that line: You stated sometime ago, sir, that your 'rule of thumb' policy was fifty-fifty on shipping our defense armament abroad.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Since that time Russia has been invaded, and we have a mission in Moscow that promises the greatest aid possible. Can you tell us anything about a new 'rule of thumb' under present conditions?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's still the 'rule of thumb'. And of course, as I said, being a 'rule of thumb', it does not mean fifty-fifty on every single item. Probably average fifty-fifty, and -- er -- in some cases,

where there seem to be immediate and very emergent needs, we are increasing the 50% that is going abroad on certain items, and perhaps decreasing it on others at the same time. A certain proportion of items which -- er -- had been allocated to Great Britain has now been reallocated to Russia.

Q Mr. President, at the time you gave us that fifty-fifty rule -- it -- you were talking specifically about aircraft. Does that still apply?

THE PRESIDENT: I was talking about everything.

Q Does that still apply?

THE PRESIDENT: On some things; some not.

Q Mr. President, you mean allocate it under the Lend-Lease Act?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no, no.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (Continuing) Purchased -- let us say a paper transaction turned back before they are taken off Lend-Lease and sold to Russia.

Q Mr. President, there are suggestions that we divert all of our production to Russia, not Great Britain, for a stated period. Er -- do you think that is feasible, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard the suggestion.

Q Congressman May made the suggestion.

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard.

Q Mr. President, have you decided the extent to which you would like to see the Neutrality Act modified?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Still under study.

Q Have you decided, sir, whether you will send a Message?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

Q Mr. President, it is also suggested that the Draft be limited, or perhaps

limited altogether; or that phase of the conscript army be frozen where it is now. Do you have any reactions you care to express?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I would like to know who suggested it. I would like to send him to St. Elizabeth's here across the river.

Q Mr. President, there is an inventory of ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q There is an inventory of trucks and busses. Has it been started? I understand you have had some report on it?

THE PRESIDENT: On trucks?

Q On trucks and busses. A defense survey.

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard it. No.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- the State Department got out a letter from the Polish Ambassador today showing that the Russians are going to allow the Poles to have their own churches.

THE PRESIDENT: I have just got it -- the mimeographed State Department letter -- but I also got it from another source this morning.

Q Would you care to make any comment on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It speaks for itself.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) As I think I suggested a week or two ago, some of you might find it useful to read Article 124 of the Constitution of Russia.

Q What does that say, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I haven't learned it by heart sufficiently to quote -- I might be off a little bit, but anyway: Freedom of conscience ---

Q (interposing) Would you say ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) ---Freedom of religion. Freedom equally to

use propaganda against religion, which is essentially what is the rule in this country, only we don't put it quite the same way.

For instance, you might go out tomorrow on -- to the corner of -- er -- Pennsylvania Avenue, down below the Press Club, and stand on a soap-box and -- er -- preach Christianity, and nobody would stop you. And then, if it got into your head, perhaps the next day preach against religion of all kinds, and nobody would stop you.

Q Mr. President, will the -- still speaking of Russia -- will the Lend-Lease Act terms be extended to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That is the thing that nobody knows at the present time.

Q Mr. President, to go back to the Pink Star cargo, I suppose it is to condition us for something, but I don't know just what.

THE PRESIDENT: To what?

Q Condition us for something, but I don't know just what. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I think, up in Maine, you won't have to go without much.

Q Mr. President, the impression seems to prevail that the exploratory talks with Japan are not going too well. Could you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, do you endorse the suggestion of Mr. Morgenthau that all profits over six per cent be taxed 100%?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think that's a Treasury matter. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about your talk today with Ambassador Daniels?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I did not get much of a chance to talk to him. He is coming back in two weeks.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment to make on what Governor Stassen (Governor Harold E. Stassen of Minnesota) said as President of the Conference of Governors, at the convention to support the established foreign policy of the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: To support what?

Q The established foreign policies of the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: I did not know that had happened.

Q It's today, at Indianapolis.

THE PRESIDENT: Mmmm. I used to be on the Executive Committee of the Council of Governors. We used to pass resolutions occasionally.

Q Mr. President, do you think Russia will be able to hold out this winter?

THE PRESIDENT: Now, honestly -- do you expect me to answer a question of that kind?

Q I thought you might like to encourage them.

THE PRESIDENT: It's what they call a 'rhetorical' question. Right?

Q Mr. President, do you think this is an opportune time to revise the Social Security structure to increase taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I took that up this morning, and they have gone back to do some more homework. And -- er -- it seems probable that pretty soon I will make a recommendation to the Congress for a more generally inclusive -- er -- law, to cover a great many people in this country who are not covered at the present time, in various groups outside of the strictly industrial groups, which are the only ones covered at the present time; and seeking to accomplish three things:

The first is to make the -- the -- er -- coverage as wide as possible. That means Unemployment Insurance and Old Age Pensions.

And -- er -- the second is to try to work out a method by which

the -- er -- Federal aid will be extended more greatly to the poorer states, which, because of -- er -- very, very low taxable values -- actual values -- very low average -- er -- earning power on the part of the individual, are literally unable to -- to comply with the matching method which is now in force.

As you know, some States -- the richer States -- are fully capable of supplementing the Federal Government contributions, so that the old-age people can get as high as \$30.00 a month. Whereas, in some States, the -- er -- wealth -- per capita wealth, or earning power, is so low that all they can pay out of the State treasury is somewhere around \$4.00 or \$6.00 a month. And of course those are areas -- where there is the -- er -- lowest per capita income -- which really are most in need of a better standard of living. And we are looking for some formula -- which has already been pretty well worked out -- by which that can be accomplished.

In other words, we will reverse the old idea 'To him that hath shall be given' and go to help the people that 'hath not'. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, is it also planned to build up a larger Unemployment reserve?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That should carry along each year with a relatively small reserve.

Q Mr. President, will this cost a great deal in taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Wait a minute.

Q Will it be necessary to increase taxes -- payroll taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: It might be, yes. Larger contributions.

Q Mr. President, at the time of your Budget Message, the per capita income formula was ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- under consideration.

THE PRESIDENT: That was the one they were working on. Well, we haven't got this thing in shape yet, even for a message, but the idea is that this would be put in as a Message to this Congress, with the -- er -- two-fold hope that if a more widely established Social Security is passed, and relatively soon, it is going to help in two ways:

First, it is going to be a slight deterrent against inflation. Of course you all understand that. And the other reason is that when the emergency is over, and we come to the readjustment period, the more people we have under a standard Social Security system, the easier the transition is going to be.

Q Mr. President, you only made two points. You said three.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, those two were the next one.

Q Mr. President, does this include any general increase of the top limit above the present \$30.00?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q There have been suggestions that you were in favor of a larger amount.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, we haven't got down to details. We are working more on the problem of principle at the present time, rather than figures, except that we are trying to make it as self-sustaining as it is possible to do.

Q How about the age limit?

THE PRESIDENT: 65.

Q 65?

Q Have you solved the problem of collections in the matter of farm labor?

THE PRESIDENT: They have got two or three things they are still talking

about. That again -- that's the detail of it and not the principle of it.

Q Didn't you send a Message on that once?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Morgenthau has a plan for a separation wage, where the employee would put money aside from his pay-check. He would receive it back when he left the firm. Has that been discussed?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Isn't that about the same as buying Baby Bonds on the installment plan? The effect is the same.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

(some of the newspapermen start to file out)

Q How many more millions of people would be covered by this extension than you are now covering?

THE PRESIDENT: About double it.

Q How many people would that be?

THE PRESIDENT: Roughly, I'd say -- this is a wild guess -- you had better check, for Heaven's Sake -- forty to eighty million.

Q One more question, Mr. President: Governor Maybank announced sometime ago your tentative acceptance to attend maneuvers in North Carolina. Have your plans passed the tentative stage?

THE PRESIDENT: Not just yet -- the usual hope.

Q Thank you, sir.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #772,
Executive Office of the President,
October 3, 1941 -- 10.50 A.M., E.S.T.

(the Hon. Joseph Davies was a guest at this Press Conference)

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Davies) Haven't you been to one of these parties before?

MR. DAVIES: No, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't you? I didn't know that.

MR. GODWIN: Is Joe Davies a Democrat?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Is he a Democrat?

THE PRESIDENT: No. He's a Russian.

MR. GODWIN: (to Mr. Davies) Hi, Joe! (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Off the record.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: He lives on caviar now.

MR. GODWIN: I know he does.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that right you live on caviar?

MR. DAVIES: When we can get it.

Q (handing newspaper clipping to the President) Here is something that might interest you.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am trying to get up for you for next Tuesday -- I hope I will have it by then -- some rather amazing -- rather disturbing figures about the health of the people of the United States. I am trying to get for you some kind of a breakdown on the -- er -- er -- percentage of the Selectees who were turned down because of physical conditions. It

is a rather alarming story. It came to me -- I was so worried by it, I thought I would do some checking. That is all we can do now. A very high percentage of physically unfit young men who were in the original draft selection.

MR. GODWIN: Do your observations take into consideration that the standards are pretty high, at least they seem to be pretty high?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, in some respects they are high, and in other respects, they are a good deal lower than they are in normal times. If in -- for example, in the -- in the Navy, where there are no Selectees, the -- the actual standards have been let down just a little bit, compared with the normal standards of the pre-emergency.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- I was talking to a man recently who has been turned down as physically disabled. He said he was just completing a seventy-mile hike, including a climb to Mount Whitney. How do you think that would bear on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would have to know more about the case. He might have had a bad heart at that. I am no mountain climber to know whether you can climb mountains with a bad heart.

Q Mr. President, in this connection, do you have in mind a program of health insurance, in connection with Social Security?

THE PRESIDENT: Not -- that hasn't been discussed in this particular thing.

Q What about using ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q What about using it to condition the boys?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it opens up a very big field. If you remember, dear old Mr. Taft, when he left the White House, went to New Haven, and did a great deal of work -- er -- I have forgotten what the organization

was called, but it was -- the purpose of it was to persuade everybody -- every man and every woman, to get a physical examination once a year. And that was a matter of very great public interest. That was an awful long time ago. We haven't heard much about it since. It does raise the -- the question of a physical checkup for everybody.

Q It would be a remarkable way of conditioning the boys?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Those that would have been rejected, after six months could be accepted?

THE PRESIDENT: A great many of these boys who are being rejected could be put in such shape that they would be better able to serve. A great many of them, a very large percentage.

Q What about Mr. Kelly's program, sir, to get America on its feet?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they are working on it -- I don't know -- you will have to find out. It is supposed to be moving.

MR. G. DURNO: Mr. President, -- er -- could you tell us whether you gave Mr. Harriman instructions, before he took the American delegation to Moscow, to take up the question of religious freedom?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes, I did.

MR. G. DURNO: Er -- well, has Ambassador Steinhardt, (Laurence A. Steinhardt, U. S. Ambassador to Russia) or any other ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I can't go into details, but I have done it before.

MR. G. DURNO: I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: I have done it before.

MR. G. DURNO: You have done it before? Anyone besides Ambassador Steinhardt?

THE PRESIDENT: I say, I can't go into details.

Q How long before?

THE PRESIDENT: Fairly recently.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Has that question also been taken up by Mr. Myron Taylor with the Pope, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will have to wait until Myron Taylor gets back.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Have you had any reports, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, I think Myron Taylor is due today, isn't he?

Q He is in Lisbon, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I think he is in Lisbon.

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh.

Q Have you had any reports, sir, from Mr. Harriman on that particular ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Not yet, no.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Do you have cause to believe, sir, that these overtures might result in some success?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you anything more, because Mr. Harriman hasn't reported yet.

MISS M. CRAIG: Mr. President, is this a start on one of the Four Freedoms?

THE PRESIDENT: A what?

MISS M. CRAIG: Is this a start on one of the Four Freedoms?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- I think, May, if you had read what I have been saying for eight years, you wouldn't have asked that question.

MISS M. CRAIG: I have tried to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) My own record, don't you think that's pretty good? Huh?

Q Mr. President, do you overrule Mr. Churchill, or does he overrule you?

The question is about this Lend-Lease program. He calls it Lease-Lend,

and you call it Lend-Lease. (laughter) We are worried about style.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is information that you have given me. I didn't know that that -- I didn't know that that terrible situation exists.

Q Mr. President, what is the status of the Neutrality proposals?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The status of Neutrality revision?

THE PRESIDENT: Won't be anything more until probably next Tuesday. I am having a meeting sometime next Tuesday.

Q Have you decided, sir, to send a Message?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't say anything until then.

Q You have decided not to send a Message?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you decided not to send a Message?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you until I have talked to those people next Tuesday.

Q Who are you planning to talk to?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably the Senate Leaders -- er -- with possibly -- er -- Congressman Bloom there as an observer from the House.

Q Does that mean a bipartisan group of Senate Leaders, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, are you aware of the statement that Senator Pepper issued last night? You may not be able to say anything about it, but he had the suggestion that you could do all this, by simply revoking the parts of the Proclamation -- by wiping out these zones -- torpedo zones -- keep-off-the-ocean signs. And I would like to ask whether that is with your acquiescence?

THE PRESIDENT: Never heard of it, Earl. Of course, you come down to a

thing like that, to making zones, to -- don't -- don't use this, except the way I -- the way I put it. In other words, don't construe it. You know what happens to construction. Sometimes they are wrong, and sometimes it is your fault, and sometimes it is my fault.

But you come down to a -- to a question of what is a dangerous zone. Now, let us say that there is some area in the ocean where one ship out of 500 gets sunk. Question: Is that a danger zone? All right. There is another area of the ocean where five ships out of 500 get sunk. Is that a danger zone? There is another -- er -- section where ten ships out of 500 get sunk. Is that a danger zone? Well, it's always a question of -- er -- somebody's got to decide it. And the law doesn't give any percentage as to whether it's a danger zone or not.

You had a very good illustration, I think it was last week, when some of the merchant crew went out because they wanted a bonus for going down to the West Indies. Well, is the West Indies a danger zone? They claimed it was. Of course, actually, we know that there haven't been any sinkings down there.

MR. GODWIN: The law -- the law directs you, I believe, sir, to make these decisions yourself, and make the proclamation ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Isn't that so?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It becomes a question of interpreting whether -- what constitutes danger, what percentage. It's like the old question of -- of the effectiveness of a blockade. If you put a blockade around a given area and -- er -- under the old international law -- I would almost say international law, which is partly dead now. A blockade is

instituted against a coast. All right. If the ships bound for that place -- for that coast get through -- through the blockade, is it an effective blockade? In another case one quarter of the ships headed there get through. Is that an effective blockade?

In the case of the Confederacy -- the United States -- the North proclaimed a blockade of the Southern coast. England didn't recognize it, because every once in a while a blockade-runner would slip through, going in or getting out. We said it was effective. England said it wasn't effective.

Q Well, Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Is this to say, sir, that you feel that the combat zones which have been proclaimed by you may be repealed?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't construe it. I am simply stating the problem.

See what I mean?

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, don't you think that American ships should be kept out of zones that you have considered dangerous?

THE PRESIDENT: The law says that. The law says that. It is a question of the definition of the word 'danger'. Now, don't construe this as meaning that I am headed for this, that, or the other thing. I am merely stating an actual fact of the difficulty of determining -- of defining the word. That's all.

Q Mr. President, that wouldn't get into a more fundamental question of arming a ship, would it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's a different thing.

Q That requires Congressional action?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, doesn't the arming of a ship also depend on prior issuance of a proclamation by you on a state of war?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. A prior proclamation?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) No.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, is it possible that you will welcome repeal of the Neutrality Act? That may sound like a foolish question, but there is so much confusion about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there is going to be some effort undoubtedly to do something with the Neutrality Act. I won't be able to tell you until next Tuesday.

Q Mr. President, when you say that arming of merchant ships is a different thing that will require Congressional action, do you mean that new Congressional consideration will be necessary concerning the question of combat areas?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. They are unrelated.

Q Mr. President, isn't this question you were just talking about deciding what is dangerous and what is not, something that is your responsibility under the law? That is up to you finally, isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Do you have any idea if that section of law has mentioned the arming of ships in those zones by you on ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hadn't thought of the subject until it was brought up this morning.

Q Well, Mr. President, could you explain why Congressional authority is needed for arming the Merchant Marine today, when Wilson armed them without Congressional authority?

THE PRESIDENT: You had better ask a good lawyer. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Where is there one?

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- I think that the law is so specific about it -- under the law we can't arm ships, that there is no -- er -- it would not be the right thing for me to try to wiggle out of a definite prohibition by the Congress.

Q Well, in other words, the mere repeal of any section would be sufficient?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, there is a story in this morning's paper saying that the White House is considering replacing Commissioner Kutz (Brig. General Charles W. Kutz, Engineer Commissioner) by Mr. Covell (Lieut. Col. William E. R. Covell). Could you comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't the faintest idea. I didn't even read the story.

Q Mr. President, have you decided on your next appointment for the F.C.C. -- Federal Communications?

THE PRESIDENT: Very nearly.

Q Mr. President, will a disability insurance be part of the new proposed Social Security program?

THE PRESIDENT: What kind of disability insurance?

Q Insurance for people permanently disabled, and therefore lose their jobs?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. The question hasn't been raised. It wasn't even in the report I sent.

MR. GODWIN AND MR. REYNOLDS TOGETHER (LOUDLY): Thank you, Mr. President.

(laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #773,
Executive Offices of the President,
October 7, 1941 -- 4.00 P.M., E.S.T.

Q When did Lauch Currie grow a mustache?

THE PRESIDENT: Mmm?

Q When did Lauch Currie grow a mustache?

(the President looked in the direction of Mr. Lauchlin Currie,
Administrative Assistant, but made no oral reply)

Q Distinguished looking.

THE PRESIDENT: (To Mr. Godwin) Earl, will you remind me to bring in,
next time I go to Hyde Park, a little book that belongs to you. I
have been keeping it beside my bedside, and I read it -- "Six Months
in the White House."

MR. GODWIN: You can have it, if it is any use.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. I have just about finished reading it. Awfully
interesting.

MR. GODWIN: I read it all the way through.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Er -- had the Fine Arts Commission look into the ques-
tion of bringing that picture ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Over here?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- down to the White House, and they told me
it was sixteen feet long.

MR. GODWIN: Oh sure. It's a whale.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't remember ever seeing it. There's no room in the
White House for it.

MR. GODWIN: They don't paint them like that any more.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. It isn't much of a picture, is it?

MR. GODWIN: Not exceptionally -- historically. All sitting around in their -- er -- (holding his hands out from his sides)

MR. DONALDSON: (interposing) All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) is a master, as you know, of understatement, and suggests that it is -- er -- somewhat unseasonable today, (temperature was 94 degrees) and that I shouldn't keep you more than five minutes. I see various people in the front row are nodding their heads. I haven't got any news.

Q What about the health of the nation?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- that I have had to put off until Friday, the Army tells me. They haven't finished their homework.

Q Mr. President, what do you think of the Gore bill, which was introduced -- on the price-ceiling plan---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q The Gore bill on price ceilings ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't seen it.

Q Haven't seen it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q It's for a general ceiling on prices.

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't seen it.

Q Mr. President, can you comment on the action of the Republic of Panama on prohibiting the arming of merchant ships?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you had better ask the Secretary about it. I suppose it is following our present legal restrictions.

Q Mr. President, do you propose to ask the ships to take off guns that have been put on under Panama registry?

THE PRESIDENT: Why the Panama registry? Don't you think -- it's under the

jurisdiction of Panama, isn't it?

Q Well, the ships are American-owned, but it is presumed that they are under Panama jurisdiction.

THE PRESIDENT: They are under Panamanian clearance.

Q Mr. President, there is a report that Great Britain is going to return somewhere between 12 and 18 tankers. Does that indicate that they asked for more than they needed?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard that report.

Q Mr. President, I was reading over what you said at the time you signed the original 1935 Neutrality Act. And there was a line in it that I wondered if you could talk about today, when you said a situation might arise in the Act, giving a very different effect from what was intended, and the inflexible provisions might drag us into war instead of keeping us out. Is that your feeling about the desire for a Neutrality change?

THE PRESIDENT: Partly, yes. Partly, the -- also, the fact that general world conditions, and our relationship to them, have changed very materially, as we all know, since then. I think -- oh, what was it? ---

Q (interposing) 1935.

THE PRESIDENT: By the last Neutrality Act. 1937, was it? 1939?

Q 1939.

THE PRESIDENT: 1939. That one. Yes. Of course, what applies to these days -- two years before, or six years before -- doesn't necessary apply today. As a matter of fact, we know it doesn't apply today.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- is there any possibility that Panamanian-registered ships will be transferred to some other Latin American country?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't even thought of it.

Q Mr. President, would you say that the action by Panama increases the need for rapid revision of the Neutrality Act?

THE PRESIDENT: I should think so.

Q Mr. President, do you have any comment on the conference this morning with the legislative leaders on the Neutrality ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think they told you we recessed until tomorrow morning.

Q Is there any particular point on which there is disagreement, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think they agreed to say that, and nothing else.

Q That is true. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything in your conversation with Mr. Myron Taylor?

THE PRESIDENT: That's five o'clock this afternoon.

Q Is there any preliminary report on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Any report from Harriman?

THE PRESIDENT: From who?

Q Harriman, or Steinhardt, on the Russians?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not that I know of. I haven't finished reading today's dispatches. (indicating his workbasket) I don't think there is anything there.

Q There was a dispatch, Mr. President, from Moscow, quoting one of the Soviet spokesmen as saying that so far as he knew, no one had approached them on the subject of religion. Had that come to your attention?

THE PRESIDENT: No. What kind of a dispatch was it?

Q From Moscow. Lozovsky (Vice Commissar S. A.) was the spokesman.

THE PRESIDENT: What kind?

Q I think it was on the printer today.

THE PRESIDENT: Was it a press story?

Q Yes. It said that so far as any official knew, nobody had approached them on the subject of religion.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen it at all.

MR. GODWIN: (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Right. Take your coats off.

MR. GODWIN: (to the President) I got a note from the Weather Bureau today, which stated this drought is caused by a blot along the seaboard of dry air sucking the air up, instead of down.

THE PRESIDENT: Really?

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #774,
Executive Offices of the President,
October 10, 1941 -- 10.45 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: How are you all this morning?

Q Any chance of Hyde Park this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Hyde Park this week end?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q That's good news.

(pause here)

THE PRESIDENT: Lots for you today.

Q Health figures?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Health figures?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have a lot of things for you today, for a change.

Er -- charity begins at home. This morning, Mr. Crim, Head Usher of the White House, came to me and said that he had been rummaging around in the basement, and had turned up about half a ton of copper and brass waste. Now, if that happens in the White House, isn't it reasonable to assume that an awful lot of Government-owned metal, which is not only usable but extremely useful, is lying around all through Washington, and in other Government buildings, and other parts of the country?

This particular metal happened to be some valves and joints, and things like that, that were put aside many years ago, with the idea

that they might possibly be used. They are out of date, and they are going to be sent down to the Navy Yard to be melted up. And I am asking Mr. Peters, the Building Superintendent for the District, to go around and make a search, and see what else he can dig up in the way of -- er -- metals like copper and brass, things we are short of, and deliver them to the nearest point where they can be melted up for Government use. And one building in which you can dig up a half a ton -- a thousand pounds -- is pretty good. And we hope to do our own house-cleaning, so that we can't be charged with not being thorough.

MR. GODWIN: Sounds like Calvin Coolidge.

THE PRESIDENT: Sounds just like President Coolidge all right. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, why couldn't you have such a campaign and have school-children bring in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Because we aren't ready to have a campaign for brass, copper and things of that kind. We have had an aluminum campaign.

Q Do you plan to melt up any brass hats? (loud laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are doing that now, and we have a much politer term for it. We call it 'liquidating'. (laughter) Essentially the same thing.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Er -- on the -- anything else on that subject?

MR. GODWIN: Er -- I want to ask about aluminum, when the time comes, sir, that was all.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. What about aluminum?

MR. GODWIN: There have been criticisms that the aluminum campaign was a fake, or a phony, that it was not necessary -- in very bald language. Do you care to say anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course it is necessary, because we are terribly short of aluminum in every part of the world. Now, how much actually came in as a result of that campaign you will have to find out from the people who ran it. It was very successful on the whole.

And, the next point is that I am going on -- I am going to call -- this year -- Navy Day, the 27th of October -- broaden it out. I think it should be broadened out. The same way next year -- Army Day -- we will broaden that out. And the thought is that on the 27th of October we will call it -- er -- Naval and Total Defense Day, and -- er -- I probably am going to go down to the hotel here to a dinner -- I think it is under the auspices of the Navy League, and say a few kind words into the microphone.

Number three, I have -- Steve (Mr. Early) has mimeographed it for you -- the checkup on the people who were disqualified under the Selective Service Act for physical, mental or educational reasons. There were about a million young men rejected, which is about fifty percent, just under -- a fraction of a point under fifty -- er -- fifty percent of all those who were called. That is a pretty serious thing. Something the country ought to take unto itself. The breakdown of this fifty percent, or a million men, is roughly somewhat as follows:

About a hundred thousand of them were turned down -- er -- because they couldn't meet the fourth grade educational requirements.

Q (interposing) How many, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: A hundred thousand. Of the other 900,000, they were rejected because of physical or mental disability. So on the basis of that 900,000, this memo Steve has had mimeographed for you shows the percentages along -- er -- physical or mental reasons. And -- er --

there is no use your taking this down, you will get it afterwards. Dental defects -- teeth -- 188,000. Little over 20% of them. That is the principal trouble. Defective eyes thirteen and something. Cardio-vascular diseases -- well, I will call it heart and circulation -- relatively the same thing -- ten percent. Musculo-skeletal defects 6-8/10ths percent. Venereal disease 6.3%. 57,000 people. Mental and nervous diseases 6.3%. Hernia 6.2%. Defects of the ears, 4.6%. Defects of the feet 4%. Defective lungs, including T.B., 2.9%. And then a very large miscellaneous group, 17%. Those include loss of an arm, or a leg, or an eye, or something of that kind. They are -- a very large percentage in the miscellaneous are caused by accidents.

Of this number, General Hershey -- er -- estimates that 200,000 out of the 900,000 can be completely rehabilitated and made available for general service in the Armed Forces. The remainder -- many of the remainder can be rehabilitated to perform only limited service. Some, because of mental and nervous cardiovascular and pulmonary diseases, and musculo-skeletal defects are incapable of rehabilitation, or even limited service, and are therefore not being considered under this new rehabilitation program for the Selective Service registrants.

The initial objective, that I decided on yesterday afternoon in this rehabilitation program, will be the 200,000 registrants who can be completely rehabilitated and made available for general military service, at a relatively small cost and a reasonably short period of time.

Certain types of diseases, such as deficiencies of teeth, operable hernia, venereal diseases, and eyes, and other minor defects, will be corrected in cases where the Army determines that the registrant will then be acceptable for general military service.

The registrant will have the privilege of having the services performed by his family physician, or his dentist, in his own community. The cost of it will be borne by the Federal Government, as a necessary part of the national defense program, and additional funds will be made available to the Selective Service System for this purpose.

Well, I think that covers it fairly well. I suppose the easiest way of putting it is this -- you have to take some specific cases:

Suppose a boy turns up, and he has got bad teeth. Well, the first thing you would find out about is whether he has his teeth or not, so we could fix it up. He will then be all right for general service. And probably in the majority of cases, that can be done in a less -- short time -- probably inside of two weeks, for the very simple reason that most people with defective teeth at that age -- it's just because they have never gone to a dentist, and they have got a lot of holes in their teeth that need fillings. To be a little more specific, it doesn't make much difference if one of his front teeth are out, but it does for his general health and availability for general service, that means a lot if his molars -- the things he chews with -- are out. So if he has -- as sometimes happens -- completely lost -- he has had his molars taken out, he is a pretty bad risk to be taken into the Army with false teeth. Something always goes wrong. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Grant had them.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Grant had them. He lost them. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- indeed, if he still has enough molars to fill, he can probably be fixed up in a couple of weeks, and then -- er -- to do it,

pick his own family dentist. If he hasn't got any family dentist, as he probably hasn't, the idea is that the Selection Board in the locality will send him to a dentist, and that the dentist, through a -- er -- scale which would be agreed on by the -- er -- American Dental Association, and the local dental association, and so forth and so on, in accordance with some scale of pay, the dentist would be paid for this boy at -- er -- oh, what? -- so much an hour and -- er -- that the actual cost to the Government will be very low -- relatively low per boy who is rehabilitated dentally.

Well, the same -- the same procedure will apply to some of these other categories, and we believe that a large -- a large majority of the dental cases can be rehabilitated -- put back -- put into the service.

In the case of defective eyes, there are some defective eyes which can be sufficiently corrected by the use of glasses -- as we all know -- for -- er -- specialized -- er -- work in the Army -- er -- in Army positions where you don't have to be able to see ten miles. Er -- probably a smaller percentage of defective eyes could be -- er -- taken in -- er -- than defective teeth. Then you come down to a couple of -- er -- categories -- cardiovascular diseases, and the musculo-skeletal diseases. Probably -- er -- a great deal smaller percentage of those cases can be rehabilitated.

Now they are going after those in this way, that those cases will be set aside by the local Selection Board, with a report of those that are what might be called doubtful cases. Then a traveling -- er -- medical board, from the Army Medical Service, will go 'round from place to place -- not one board, but teams. I suppose 'teams' is the easiest

way of putting it. They will go around -- they will look over these doubtful cases, where there is a possibility of rehabilitation, and they will make the final determination as to whether -- er -- such cases should be taken care of by a doctor, for the purpose of rehabilitation.

Then you come to the 57,000 cases of venereal -- 6.3%. Well, of course we know nowadays that the very large majority of those can be cured, and cured in very short order. So they will not be merely discharged, they will be kept under the orders of the Selection Board and told to go and get cured, and report back. There won't be any evasion of service, of which there have been a number of cases because of that particular thing. They will be compelled, under orders, to get cured up and report back for service in the Army.

Then you come to mental and nervous diseases. Again 57,000 of them. 6.3%. Well, probably a very small proportion of those can be rehabilitated, but that requires again a recheck by these traveling -- er -- medical boards. For instance, we have had quite a number of cases of youngsters who have gone before the Board, and there -- they were so scared that -- er -- they were so nervous that their pulse went up from a normal to about 150. (laughter) And they were put down as a nervous case. Well, that doesn't necessarily unfit them for the Army. Possibly a good regular life and much better food than they have had before might cure this nervousness. In other words, it isn't an organic nervousness from which they're suffering. It may be just plain fright.

Then the next category is hernia. Well, we all know that a certain percentage -- probably a quarter of all people who suffer from

hernia -- I suppose at that age -- with a relatively simple operation can be put back on their feet and made perfectly sound. Now, at the present time, practically all of the hernia cases are being rejected. We hope to salvage about a quarter of those boys, and have them fixed up and go into the service.

Then you come to defects of ears. We all know it is a mighty difficult thing to cure deafness, and there isn't very much that can be salvaged out of that category. And defects of the feet -- you can't change that very much. And it depends, of course, on the degree of flat-foot. Defective lungs, including T.B. There isn't -- 2.9 -- there isn't very much that can be done on that. Well, that makes up a rough picture of the 900,000 who have been rejected, and add those still at about the same average -- er -- we would expect to rehabilitate as the first step. And in this general problem -- this program -- it is a problem to rehabilitate about 200,000, salvage them.

Now that leaves, of course, certain -- what is not down here on the paper, because that is -- that is what might be called the immediate program, and it -- it brings up other larger questions of why, roughly, half of all the boys who are called for military service are physically, and in some cases mentally defective. It raises the question as to why ten percent of all the boys who were called -- er -- in all the boys that were rejected -- had to be rejected because they didn't have enough education to get by.

Well, that is -- that is quite an indictment of this nation of ours, the physical, the mental, and the educational. And it is a thing which people are going to give a lot of thought to. We have got to do a lot of studying as to -- er -- how the general health of the young

men and young women of the nation can be improved in the future.

It's a long range thing. It isn't at this time a matter so much of aiding immediate national defense for this year, or the next year, but it is of getting a stronger race of Americans in the days to come. And that is why this subject is going to be of a good deal of interest in the papers, and people talking about it. It requires a more detailed study than anything that we have ever attempted. It requires the cooperation of -- er -- States, and counties, and cities, and townships. And we hope that --er -- out of it all, we are going to accomplish something toward the better health of the nation.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The -- one of the phases which we can't approve yet, because we haven't studied it -- is the phase that has been talked about a great deal in the -- in the past few years, and that is the periodic checkup on everybody.

I suppose, under the Constitution, a person has a right to die at an early age. Constitutional. But I think -- I think the -- er -- what we call government, local government, state government, has a right to say to that fellow, "Now, look, don't die. Why don't you get better? Why let this thing go on?" -- and know more or less as to whether that individual insists on dying or not. Constitutionally, he has the right to do it. But the Government ought to know what his attitude is. (laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Mr. Chairman, by what authority --- (loud laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Mental case, Mr. President. (meaning Miss Craig)

MR. GODWIN: Go ahead, May.

MISS MAY CRAIG: I'm sorry.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, Senator? (laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: By ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Thank you.

MISS MAY CRAIG: By what authority can you make a man have an operation, or be cured, before you take him into the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: When he appears before the Selection Board he is under the direction of the Selection Board. No question about that.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there was the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You can always induct him right then and there, if you have to.

MR. GODWIN: He is inducted and given a rating, sir, I think?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Isn't the rating on ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Yes, but that is a matter of regulations. You can induct him if he is recalcitrant, and fix him up, and in probably a great overwhelming majority of cases he will prefer not to go into uniform that day, but get cured up by his local doctor or dentist.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask a question, sir? In the Selective Service, with which I have some slight experience, we find differences of opinion by Medical Boards, which have made dentist examinations, who are ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Surely.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- contradicted. Is that being simplified at all under this procedure?

THE PRESIDENT: Under the procedure, there may be differences between doctors in the -- who are attached to the local ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Selection Board. Now, where those dif-

ferences exist, of course -- it's a very small percentage of cases -- one of these traveling boards will come in and make a fair decision.

MR. GODWIN: The Army itself, sir, I think has the final decision?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's what I mean. They will do it. Practically all the reports of one of these traveling boards which come around here -- they might be a traveling board that will -- take the Selection Boards in -- what? -- Maryland, and the District, and West Virginia, and Virginia, which -- that board will go around to the Selection Board localities as a continuous process.

Q Mr. President, what will it cost to rehabilitate the 200,000? Have you any estimates on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't give that cost, but relatively far less than if the Army were to take them all in, and provide housing for them, and food and clothing for them, and their own medical service. Then, of course, there is another -- that was -- we talked over about that yesterday.

The Army -- er -- presented a plan, which they did not approve of, for just that, to take all these 200,000 cases into the Army and put up barracks for them, put them in uniform, and start paying them, which you would have to do, and then turn them over to Army doctors, or dentists, to fix them up.

Well, that would cost a lot of money, probably cost \$500,000,000. Now it's a great deal cheaper, and a great deal more satisfactory to the average Selectee to forego that -- live at home and get fixed up by his own local doctor.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- the primary program is supposedly a salvage program. Do you expect to launch any immediate program to start behind the conditions?

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I have just been talking about.

Q Well, you said it's a long range program.

THE PRESIDENT: Perhaps.

Q Do you expect to launch a preventive program soon, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course we have made studies on it.

Q (interposing) Has that been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Pretty complicated thing.

Q Mr. President, does that have any connection with the general question of socialized medicine?

THE PRESIDENT: No. None at all.

Q Mr. President, it has been suggested that an easy way to cut down the number of rejections would be for the Army to correct their education. Do you think the Army should do that?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, that 100,000 rejected because they haven't a fourth-grade education, are they people who cannot be educated?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. People who are poor, as well as ignorant.

Q Will anything be done about them?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, that is of course primarily -- always has been -- a State matter, because the Federal Government's educational work has always been limited to -- er -- suggestions, and -- er -- a clearing house of information for all the States' educational departments. It is primarily a State matter.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Education is a local problem.

Q Would you not then favor Federal aid to education?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would you not favor Federal aid to education?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't like to say 'yes or no' to that question. There are -- as we know, there are certain sections of the United States that are so poor that their tax valuations -- their assessments -- are necessarily insufficient to bring in the revenue to run modern and adequate schools. Now, perhaps some day we may come to some form of Government aid for the -- not the poorer, but the poorest sections of the United States. As it is, this only proves that they can't afford to educate their own children, but I don't think that the Federal Government ought to undertake running the educational field. Government as a -- I think there are so many -- a great majority of States have pretty good educational systems.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And certainly the richer States do not need any Federal money.

Q Mr. President, on these below normal in education ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Are the people who are -- who are handicapped in health, and in education, grouped in any particular part of the country, or are they pretty ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, that depends -- it depends on which classification that -- there are many classifications. It is perfectly true that the -- er -- larger part of the -- er -- people who failed in education come from the South. Now, when you come down to the -- er -- the medical end of it -- medical and dental -- er -- in some diseases there is a greater proportion in the North. Some -- there is a greater proportion in the West. And some -- er -- of these cases, the greater proportion in the South. I don't know. I haven't got the

figures, so it's a general guess on my part. I would say, offhand, that on the heart disease thing, and the nervous disorders, you would find a higher percentage coming from the cities than you would from the farms. Now that's just guess. But it is based on what you might call common sense reasoning. We farmers are not so nervous as you city slickers. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, is there any comparison between rejections in the United States and in England?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- may we leave this subject now, and may I inquire -- (laughter) -- er -- whether you have any reports, sir, that Russia might be nearing the point where she will have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- to accept an armistice?

THE PRESIDENT: None at all.

MR. GODWIN: Have you any knowledge of the manner in which your letter to Mr. Stalin was reported in Berlin before anywhere else, or are you aware of that?

THE PRESIDENT: I got a hunch.

MR. GODWIN: A hunch? How does it -- do you care to share the hunch?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: Are you interested at all? Is it a matter of interest ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (adding) --- to the Government?

THE PRESIDENT: You might say interest, but not very great surprise.

Q Mr. President, have you any information that the letter was broadcast to the Russian troops in the field?

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea. I think not.

Q Mr. President, would you favor the Federalization of the Unemployment Compensation System?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q The Federalization of Unemployment Insurance?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, we are still working on that.

Q Is that one of the matters under consideration?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes and no. Partial is under consideration, but not total.

Q Partial?

THE PRESIDENT: Partial Federalization.

Q Oh, I see.

Q Mr. President, do our diplomatic relations with Panama continue unchanged despite the switch in government down there?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely.

Q Do you care to comment any further on that change of government?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, I don't think so. I talked to the State Department last night, and -- er -- apparently the only thing I can say is that the change was apparently made in accordance with the provisions of the constitution of Panama, and no question of re-recognition is involved.

Q Mr. President, have we guns enough to arm the merchant ships now?

THE PRESIDENT: I can only tell you that off the record, which of course will be in Berlin immediately. It doesn't make much difference.

(laughter) -- (adding): and in Tokio. We expect to have enough guns to arm them as fast as -- pretty nearly as fast as they come in. Of course, they are scattered all over the Seven Seas.

Q Will that include anti-aircraft?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Include anti-aircraft?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on what you call an anti-aircraft gun. That's
a military secret.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: (aside) Let's break up.

MR. GODWIN AND MR. REYNOLDS: (together) Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Who can keep that off the record?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Who can keep that off the record?

MR. EARLY: You can't. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #775,
Executive Offices of the President,
October 14, 1941 -- 4.15 p.m.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I got some figures here, and I have been -- on Lend-Lease -- and as the people in the front row who heard me talking to Steve (Mr. Early) -- er -- I am trying to simplify them down. Until Steve came in with these figures in -- er -- terms of what we know about the 100,000 people who have been rejected lacking education, I was in the third grade, but now I am in the fourth, since I talked to Steve, and I am assuming that all of you are still in the third grade.

Q (aside) We are in the second grade.

THE PRESIDENT: During the month of September, Lend-Lease aid exceeded that of any previous month. There were actually transferred to nations resisting Nazi-ism, articles and services -- actually transferred -- of approximately a hundred and fifty-five million -- billion dollars -- No. (laughter) We all learned that in kindergarten. That is about three times the average monthly amount of transfers during the previous six months.

Next, the total Lend-Lease aid during the month of September, including articles and services in process -- in other words, this is not deliveries, this is payments made for articles in process -- was about two hundred million. Er -- fourth, well, those -- those two -- two categories they went to Britain, China, South America, the Poles and the Norwegians.

MR. GODWIN: Both of these?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Fourth, the Lend-Lease aid alone is only a part of

the total aid which is actually flowing to the people fighting the aggressors. In other words, since the beginning of the war -- the first of September, 1939 -- the total amount of exports to Britain alone has amounted to about five billions of dollars, all of which were paid for in cash. And that's rather an interesting -- rather a significant figure.

A very large part of the present exports, which are going directly to Britain at the present time, are still those articles which are being paid for, in cash, by Britain, but which were ordered before the Lend-Lease Bill went into effect last March. Now that proportion that is going to Britain, at the present time, is of course a diminishing ratio, but is being more than made up for by the increasing ratio of Lend-Lease Act deliveries.

It's -- for example, if you were to take a -- what shall I say? -- a square piece of paper that was a little -- er -- wider at the right-hand side than the left-hand side, and beginning at the left-hand side -- the shorter end -- you would find up to last April or May that everything was stuff that England had ordered beforehand, and was actually being paid for. Now, from that left-hand corner -- up at the left-hand lower corner up to the right-hand upper corner -- if you follow me, there's a line, and the top half is gradually getting smaller until it reaches the upper right-hand corner. Draw a picture of it, if you like. (Mr. Godwin displays a drawing he just made) And the lower part -- the lower portion of that piece of paper below the lines, starts at nothing -- last spring -- and is constantly increasing, until you reach the right-hand margin, where it occupies the whole of the line. That will be after the previously placed British orders have all

been delivered, and then everything delivered will be under Lend-Lease.

MR. GODWIN: That -- that -- that graph means that the diagonal line is the increasing -- ?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. The lower piece is the Lend-Lease, and that is getting bigger and bigger all the time, and the upper part is what they ordered beforehand, and is getting smaller and smaller.

(To Mr. Godwin) You've got a good picture there. You can even draw a straight line. That's more than I can.

MR. P. BRANDT: When do you estimate that the cash orders, or the cash now spent, will be exhausted, and it will be on Lend-Lease?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, Pete. I would say quite a long while.

MR. P. BRANDT: You said the end of 1943 on some of the orders?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I hope not as far as that. I should hope that the bulk will be all cleaned up by the end of 1942.

In September -- No -- as of today, all but five percent of the original seven billion dollars appropriated last March has been allocated to War, Navy, Agriculture, Treasury and the Maritime Commission, for the production of arms, ships, food and other defense articles and services.

During -- since March, contracts have been -- this is 95% -- have been let at the average rate of seven hundred million dollars a month, and we only have five percent still to contract for. That means ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, does that mean, sir, that all but five percent has been placed under contract or merely allocated?

THE PRESIDENT: Allocated is right. Not placed under contract.

MR. GODWIN: May I ask a question? What was the seven hundred million dollars

a month? Is that an allocation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's contract. Well, in other words, you can figure it out. In six months, seven times six is what? ---

Q (interposing) 42.

THE PRESIDENT: 42. Four billion, two hundred million dollars have been actually contracted. That means the period of program -- programming and allocating under the first appropriation is now virtually completed. The work of production is on the way, and we are ready to take on the additional amount.

Q Mr. President, -- er -- before you got to the seven billion, my understanding is that there were certain tentative allocations. Are you making any tentative allocations of the five billion, 985?

THE PRESIDENT: Only the ones that are in the bill itself. All of the -- they are all in categories, just like the first bill.

Q Is that as far as the details have gone?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you used the word 'transferred' in the opening of your --- That is a transfer of cash, is that what you mean?

VOICE: (interposing) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Or is it transfer of goods -- delivery of goods?

THE PRESIDENT: Articles of services transferred.

MR. GODWIN: These gotten delivered?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, you said they went, part of them, to the Norwegians and Poles. Where would they be? In Canada and England?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, through their respective governments.

Q Mr. President, Senator Wheeler was quoted as saying that we were being

urged to send an expeditionary force of three million men to Europe.

Have you any comment on that?

THE PRESIDENT: I am not surprised at his statement.

I sent today a letter to Mr. Stettinius, which I will try to put into English. It allocates -- allocates -- Lend-Lease funds to the full extent of the balances that remain under the first appropriation. It gives him authority to do that. Secondly, to transfer defense articles to the value of five hundred million, which is an extension, that is to say, without my signature. It is a -- er -- a delegation of authority. I'd already, as you know, done it beforehand, to save time. This gives him authority to do that -- without my signature -- five hundred million more. And third, to make the necessary transfers which were allowed by law, between the various categories under the first appropriation bill. The fourth thing is a technicality.

Q Mr. President, does that clean up the outstanding five percent?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Yes.

Q That is all cleaned up now?

THE PRESIDENT: There hasn't been -- that last five percent hasn't been allocated, but that gives Mr. Stettinius the right to do it without asking me first.

Q Mr. President, I am not clear -- was that five hundred million in addition to the original three hundred million, or five hundred million altogether?

THE PRESIDENT: An additional. I think that is quite a strain on us. That's all I have got for today.

Q Mr. President, would you care to comment on the various proposals in Congress to put a limit on defense contract profits -- seven or eight

percent?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think I have got any news on that at all. I haven't talked to anybody about it for weeks.

Q Mr. President, is there anything in the situation on the Russian front that would cause you to doubt the ultimate value of the Lend-Lease program?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nothing.

MR. P. BRANDT: Will it be necessary for the Russians to have Lend-Lease aid?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know yet, Pete. I have got to have -- I have got to see Mr. Harriman before I would have any idea on that subject.

Q Are they asking for further financial aid, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: They are buying right along.

Q They are buying right along?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q For cash?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Is that paid for by gold transfer, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Er -- part of it, and part of it was by a -- a purchase by Mr. Jesse Jones of -- what was it? -- I told you last week -- manganese, I think it was.

Q (interjecting) Strategic materials.

Q (interjecting) Strategic materials.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, various materials.

Q Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (haltingly) Thank you, Mr. President. (and then to the President): That was all right.

ACR 10-30-56

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #776,
Held in the Study of the President's Home
in Hyde Park, N. Y.
October 17, 1941 -- 10.40 A.M.

(Mr. Harry Hopkins and Mrs. Anna ^[Boettigen] Boetigger were present at this
Press Conference)

THE PRESIDENT: (as newspapermen file in) Hello, good people. (short
pause here) Well, I don't know what you are getting out those books
for. (pause here) I don't think I have anything.

Q Mr. President, have you heard about the torpedoing of the Kearny?

THE PRESIDENT: Had you got that already?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Given out by the Navy Department?

Q Yes, sir.

Q A very brief communique, without any details.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I got that as soon as I got here this morning, and
within, I think, three minutes.

Q Three minutes from your arrival here?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I don't think there is -- any comment is necessary
on my part. All details will be given out by the Navy Department as
they come in.

Q Did your reports indicate whether there have been any casualties?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I asked about that. They didn't have anything yet.

Q Did the reports indicate whether any attempt at retaliation was made
against the submarine?

THE PRESIDENT: They have no facts at all, except just the sinking -- the
torpedoing.

Q Our ship apparently was within the defensive zone, was it not -- three hundred miles southwest?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. Oh, of course. Certainly.

Q Just another act of piracy?

THE PRESIDENT: What? That's what -- I have just said I am not commenting on it at all, until the Navy Department has established all the facts.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Superficially, Mr. President, do you -- the most remarkable thing seemed to be that the destroyer could be hit by a torpedo and still remain afloat.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Doesn't one of those torpedoes have a pretty devastating effect on a lightly-armed destroyer?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to put you in the Navy, Tom. (laughter)

VOICE: That's a good idea.

MR. G. DURNO: May we use direct quotes on that?

THE PRESIDENT: There is one thing about it George, he floats, doesn't he? We know that. At least we know he floats in the Pacific. The question is whether he will float in the Atlantic. It's a different density of water. This is all off the record, of course. (laughter) He's taking it down, though.

Q Well, he's not ninety-nine percent pure, Mr. President. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, the headlines this morning are very grim, both from Russia and Japan. You met yesterday with your small group of advisers. Is there anything that you can say?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think that I have any news at all.

Q Well, may I try this? (laughter) In Philadelphia, we have a ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I thought it was coming. Go ahead.

Q (continuing) --- sewage system, which literally stinks.

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I am primed.

Q (continuing) If you are primed ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You go ahead and develop the story through.

Most of these fellows don't read the Inquirer anyway. You go ahead.

Q (continuing) For many years it -- they have had a very bad situation where the water has to be treated with so much chlorine that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) A little like Poughkeepsie. A little like Poughkeepsie, only worse.

Q (continuing) --- And the sewage system is so bad. And at a time like this when the river is lower -- it literally stinks. It is an impossible situation. Philadelphia at this time has become very much of a defense center, with a large percentage of our defense contracts. And it's your ball now, sir. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: You are absolutely correct. The situation is -- there -- is figuratively and literally a stench in the nostrils. And it is a thing that has been developing over a great many years. There is apparently no borrowing power in the city to -- er -- modernize their water supply and their sewage system. Of course, as I understand it, the -- er -- both systems have been hocked -- borrowed against, up to the hilt. Well, it is because of the -- of that situation, that which has been developing, that I sent a letter -- I think Bill Hassett may just as well make copies of it -- which is the easiest way -- then you won't have to take it down -- to McNutt, (Paul V. McNutt, Administrator, Federal Security Agency) which I sent yesterday.

(Reading): "Reports have reached me to the effect that the water and sewer systems of the City of Philadelphia have been allowed to

fall into such a state of disrepair as to constitute a threat to the defense work from fires, and a menace to the health and welfare of the City, on which we are counting for so large a portion of our defense production.

"Defense contracts for more than a billion dollars -- that's an awful lot -- have been placed in Philadelphia, and in addition, the Philadelphia Navy Yard, the Frankford Arsenal, and Quartermaster Depot, make the Federal Government the single largest direct employer in the City. The entire nation has, therefore, an especial and immediate interest in the health and living conditions of the people of Philadelphia, and the safeguarding of all the great industries of that city.

"Will you please determine by a prompt investigation whether or not there are conditions in Philadelphia which constitute a menace to our defense program and, if you find that there are, will you recommend ways and means by which the Federal Government may cooperate with the local authorities to insure that national as well as local interests will be served and safeguarded."

So that's started on its way.

Q Yes. Well, Mr. President, assuming that Mr. McNutt does find that, what ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) --- what would -- what might the Government do?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you see, I can't -- I can't say, because I have just asked him that question. (reading): "If you find that there are, will you recommend ways and means."

Q Mr. President, to get out of Philadelphia for a minute -- er -- er --

are you hopeful of keeping these negotiations with Japan open?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any news on that.

Q Are you keeping in touch with Secretary Hull?

THE PRESIDENT: I talked to him this morning.

Q I see.

Q Mr. President, may I get in a local plug? Have you been reading the series that we started this week?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Were they brought to your attention? Who brought this situation to your attention? Was it Mr. Biddle?

THE PRESIDENT: Gosh -- I don't know. The -- er -- No, I haven't -- I couldn't tell you. So many things coming in all the time -- just temporarily have forgotten. I have been -- I have been hearing about it, of course, off and on for a long time. Several years. The thing goes back when I was in the Navy Department and started to work down at the Philadelphia Navy Yard for the first time, in 1913, and there again I had to hold my nose all the way down there. That was caused by complete lack of sewage. You remember that situation.

Q Mr. President, do you -- after you receive this full report from the Navy, do you expect to make any kind of a statement?

THE PRESIDENT: Can't tell you. Have no idea until I get a full report.

MR. G. DURNO: Er -- Mr. President, having done so nobly by Philadelphia, would you do as much by San Francisco? (laughter) They seem to be interested in the possibility that the -- er -- Raker Act might be amended. Is that ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Go ahead and explain it to the boys.

MR. G. DURNO: No. I don't want to. (laughter)

Q (to the President) You are trying to duck work today.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I got the answer. (laughter)

MR. G. DURNO: (continuing) So this Hetch Hetchy power could continue to be piped out by the Pacific and Electric -- Gas Company.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, George, I suppose the easiest way -- as long as you won't give them all the facts ---

Q (interposing) He is going to give them. (laughter).

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Way back in 1913, the Raker Act ---

Q (interposing) How do you spell that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: R-A-K-E-R, I think.-- Yes. Which is to permit the City of San Francisco to build the Hetch Hetchy water and power facilities on Federally owned land. In that Act there was a public power provision which had already been ruled on by the court. The provision was that the City of San Francisco, when the system was built, had to distribute the power through public facilities. Now that was in the original Act, and it was -- probably the Act would not have got through the Congress if it had not been for that provision. The present situation is that the City of San Francisco has made a contract to distribute this power through the Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and that matter is now being re-litigated. As I said, it has been passed on once, and we are going to do it again.

Q You mean, Mr. President, that they are taking a further appeal?

THE PRESIDENT: They are taking an appeal from ---. Well, as I -- I am not dead sure of that, so don't put it in -- it doesn't make very much difference. There has been a Supreme Court ruling. But they are trying, in this suit, to differentiate the new suit from the old suit, and the Government is saying that the old decision applies. In other

words, carries out the perfectly clear intent of what the law said.

Er -- there has been some political effort to tell people that the Congress will change the Raker Act, and let the City out of the definite obligation under which the -- er -- Hetch Hetchy was built. I think all on that I can say is that -- er -- my own personal opinion is that the passage of such an Act is the height of improbability. I doubt very much if a prudent Congress, or a prudent Administration, would be willing to relieve the City of San Francisco of the obligations of the original Act under which the whole thing was started. Is that what you wanted, George?

MR. G. DURNO: Very nice, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Right. (laughter)

Q Er -- getting back to the Kearny, Mr. President, did Secretary Knox --
er -- give you the information?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Er -- still on that same question, Mr. President. May we assume that the instructions you issued in the case of the Greer -- to hunt down the marauder -- apply in this case?

THE PRESIDENT: Regular Navy orders. I don't know that I would say to hunt down the marauders. You ought to go into the Navy, Tom, -- really -- honestly. Sea-faring -- sea-faring -- er -- question. Why, Lord -- we'll get you to Annapolis and put you on the football team. You will be all right. We are turning them out -- this is off the record -- they are ninety-day wonders -- over at -- in Annapolis. It's a short course. You get paid for the taking of it, and graduate as an Ensign, and --- (he laughs).

Q I want a story not a commission, Mr. President.

Q Let's throw him over the side.

THE PRESIDENT: What? Yes. I don't think there is another thing. I finished up last night before I left, practically all -- what we call the home-work. In other words, just waiting, sitting here in case anything develops.

Q Have you given any thought, Mr. President, to this -- to this increasing number of strikes in defense?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think probably that there will be something from O.P.M. on that pretty soon. When, I don't know. Pretty soon.

Q Mr. President, by any chance, you are not going to make any visit down to that munitions plant today -- this week end? I wouldn't think so.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't believe so.

Q You haven't any thoughts ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) When are they going to open it up?

Q Well, you see, it's a progressive thing, and they haven't -- well, they have gone into production in a limited way -- it's very limited as yet. And they haven't got any number of employees yet.

THE PRESIDENT: Is there any more news in Poughkeepsie about building new so-called defense facilities -- stores, and hospitals, and schools, and so forth and so on, at the expense of the Federal Government?

Q Well, there is a hospital addition which -- er -- is contemplated here.

THE PRESIDENT: What has the population of the city gone up in the past year?

Q Very little -- couple of hundred.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I thought.

Q In the decade, you mean?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I mean in the last year.

Q Oh. It might have gone up about three or four hundred, because of the --
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, this is off the record -- you can't use it --but actually, just for guidance in the office, where the population of a city has only gone up four or five hundred, from forty thousand to forty-four -- forty thousand to four or five hundred, we can't call that defense and create a defense need. If we are building a new school, or building an addition to a hospital anywhere, the Federal Government is only doing these things where there has been a tremendous influx of population and the city can't take care of it. Well, four or five hundred additional people is not a great influx of population.

Q Yes, sir. Of course this plant down below does intend to employ say fifteen hundred or more, when it gets started. And as I understand it, there is another contemplated addition.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, a great many of the fifteen hundred will be people who live in Poughkeepsie, anyway.

Q Or surrounding.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, when you talked to Secretary Hull, did he inform you that General Tojo (Lieut. General Eiki Tojo) was appointed Premier of the government in Japan?

[Hideki?]

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't any news on that at all today.

Q Thank you.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Mr. President, it couldn't be referred to in a defense -- general way could it, about the local situation with reference to the hospital?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that would be all right. I think that would be all right. I wouldn't refer to it -- to the hospital, or any particular project. I think it would be all right to refer to the -- er -- general

idea, and we can only spend Federal money when there has been a great influx.

Q Then I can draw my own conclusions.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #777,
Executive Offices of the President,
October 21, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Are we all here? Still coming in?

Q Big house today.

MR. GODWIN: A big house today.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I regret to say -- I got -- I just had a flash announcing the sinking of another American ship -- torpedoed -- the American ship LEHIGH -- torpedoed in approximately 8 degrees north, 14 degrees west, which is -- er -- just north of the Equator, and between South America and Africa, near the -- pretty well offshore -- but nearer to the southern end of the bulge of Africa. Night before last, at nine o'clock. One boat of survivors has been picked up.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Sunday?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And it is understood that two other boats are missing and are now being searched for. And people in the boat that was picked up believe that no one was killed by the explosion, but that some were wounded. I have been trying -- I have only got this -- had this for about five minutes -- I have been trying to find out where she was. Apparently she is an American ship that had gone over to Bilbao, in Spain, discharged her cargo, and was running without any cargo -- empty -- to the Gold Coast, on a trading voyage. And I think we can all draw our conclusions from those statements.

MR. GODWIN: What flag, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: American flag.

Q How large a ship, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How large a ship, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: About 9,000 tons, the Maritime Commission reported.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Can you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) A sizeable ship.

MR. GODWIN: Can you tell us, or would you tell us how the message got to you?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you that.

Q Did you say, sir, it was an American flag ship?

THE PRESIDENT: So the Maritime Commission says.

Q Did the reports, sir, say how many men were aboard?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q That was in American defense waters?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That was on the American side of the Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: What do you mean?

Q I mean the sinking took place ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) On the Seven Seas.

Q Who owned the ship?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you. You would have to find out.

Q (interposing) Do we know who sunk her?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, put on your 'thinking cap'. Who do you suppose? Certainly wasn't a British submarine. It certainly wasn't one of our submarines. And certainly wasn't an Argentine submarine. It certainly wasn't a French submarine. So what kind of submarine was it? In other words, a process of elimination. Sometimes a very useful thing to do, even in -- er -- writing stories for newspapers. Of course,

it's very rarely done. Leave that off the record. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Is it certain ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Is that fair?

MR. GODWIN: Yes, I suppose it's below the belt.

Q Is it certain, sir, that it was a torpedo from a submarine?

THE PRESIDENT: Surely. Yes.

Q Any passengers aboard, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so -- just an ordinary merchant ship.

Q Can you tell us what cargo?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That's all I got from the Maritime Commission.

Q Well outside of that so-called blockade region ---?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Whose blockade region?

Q The Germans' so-called blockade region.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that's all right, so long as you use the word 'so-called.'

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you propose to do about it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I just got it three minutes ago.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, -- er -- the Secretary of State, when asked a similar question, said they weren't going to waste any time or stationery on, I think he said, international pirates.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, which is good.

MR. GODWIN: Would that be a -- a good -- er -- er ----

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) My answer is 'ditto'.

MR. GODWIN: That's it.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us whether the American Navy has taken control over the Port of Halifax?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I saw something from -- er -- the Toronto Star, something like that -- which carried this story. Of course there's nothing to it.

It's all -- I have forgotten how -- it was a certain -- something -- a very polite way of putting it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The way I got it was this, that -- er -- we understand that this report -- what's that -- (meaning something he was reading) -- does not conform to the fact that anything is being done immediately. But, of course, as we all know, the -- er -- joint commission, of which Mayor LaGuardia is the American Chairman, has for a long time been considering, in the event of attack, the joint American-Canadian defense, in the same way that we have taken up with other nations of this hemisphere the hemispheric defense. I suppose ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- they have mentioned Halifax in that, and I guess they have probably mentioned Toronto, and Chicago.

Q Will that mean, if the -- if the Canadian -- er -- fleet has been moved east of Iceland, would that mean that we would take over the protection of that area in the North Atlantic?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I never heard of it. East of Iceland? It would be awfully rough out there.

Q It would be.

Q Mr. President, apparently ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There isn't any land there. I don't know what they base on.

Q Apparently this thing of keeping ships out of the so-called combat zones doesn't keep them from being sunk, does it, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Apparently not.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) That's all right.

Q Mr. President, would you say that the action of Panama in removing the

ban on arming of merchantmen, now makes the combat zone restrictions in the Neutrality Act less pressing a matter than arming our merchantmen?

THE PRESIDENT: I would have to think that one over.

Q Mr. President, can you give us any further details of the attack on the destroyer KEARNY?

THE PRESIDENT: I think nothing else has come in. I talked to Admiral Stark about it, and he is going up on the Hill this afternoon. And I talked to him this morning. He didn't have anything new at that time.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, can you tell us about Mr. Harriman's report?

THE PRESIDENT: Only what he said yesterday at the airport, Pete. That covers it pretty well.

MR. P. BRANDT: He said there might be a statement from you today.

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't seen him today. He is coming in as soon as you go away. That will be too late.

Q Mr. President, you said that -- that the LEHIGH was sunk at nine o'clock the night before last. Is that our time, or do you know?

THE PRESIDENT: Honestly, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, is there any information on where these submarines operating in the South Atlantic might be based?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, if I said No, you would say we don't know anything. If I said Yes, it wouldn't be wholly correct, so you've got me in an awful hole. (laughter) Some of them come all the way from the Occupied part of France, and some of them probably refuel from -- er -- tankers that get out from the same relative area. And where they refuel in the middle of the ocean varies from voyage to voyage, and day to day. And we wish they would have one definite place to refuel, and then we could catch them.

Q Sir, are there any indications that they are using any of the islands along the African coast -- West African coast -- as temporary bases?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Lot of reports.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us what -- er -- the orders to the Navy cover in a case like that?

THE PRESIDENT: Why, nothing new on that. Same general orders.

Q Shoot-on-sight order?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is it a shoot-on-sight order?

THE PRESIDENT: You've got to see something before you shoot.

Q I said 'on sight.'

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I said 'on sight.'

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, that isn't worth much, is it, if you can't see the fellow.

Q Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President, what do you think of shooting an empty ship on the ocean, carrying our flag, with ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) On a trade voyage.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) On a trade voyage. How would you like to express that?

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I have been saying. I didn't really think in this case any comment was necessary, because it speaks ---

Q (interposing) What was that?

THE PRESIDENT: I said before, I did not think any comment was necessary. It spoke for itself.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) As you say, it was an empty ship on a trading

voyage, way down somewhere near the Equator, and there is no fighting going on. Cordell Hull is absolutely dead right when he calls it piracy. It means that ships of any nation, on any of the Seven Seas, may be attacked and sunk without warning. And you might say -- a good many of the younger people have forgotten the words, but the older people remember what a commotion was caused by the message that was dug up in the -- the Argentine in 1917 -- I think it was the German Ambassador down there -- about the German policy of saying that ships were sunk "Spurlos ---"

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Spurlos Versenkt. (Sunk without trace)

S-P-U-R-I-O-S-S ---

Q (interposing) L-O-S.

THE PRESIDENT: S-P --- I have forgotten my German.

MR. GODWIN: S-P-U-R-L-O-S ---

Q (interposing) I-S.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I-S.

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Only one 'S.' That's right. You are right.

My Lord -- a long time since I was there.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) V-E-R-S-A ---

Q (interposing) Is the LEHIGH the type of ship that would be armed, if the armed ship bill goes through?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think -- I suppose because -- because you can't say that one will be, and the next one won't be.

Q I mean type.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Type ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Type?

Q (continuing) --- would be armed. It's the type of ship that would be armed.

THE PRESIDENT: From the way things are going now, if a ship is going from here to Cuba, we might have to arm her. How can we tell if it reaches there safely? Arm them all.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us in relation to this case, what is the distinction between an act of piracy and an act of war?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, My Lord -- I ain't thinking quick enough today.

Q Mr. President -- er -- do you want to endorse what Mr. Hull said about repealing Section 2, as well as 6, from ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think I wrote a Message on it, didn't I?

Q Well, you weren't quite as specific as that.

THE PRESIDENT: Have you read the Message?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Do it again. It will grow on you. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you seen Representative Vinson about his bill for a ceiling on defense profits?

THE PRESIDENT: Representative who?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Vinson.

Q Representative Vinson of Georgia.

THE PRESIDENT: About doing what?

Q About a bill for placing ceilings on defense profits?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q There is a report that you did talk to him.

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, last Saturday, Mr. MacKenzie King, the Prime Minister of Canada, announced his price-fixing scheme to freeze prices at approximately their present level. Do you think that has any parallel in this country, or do you have any message which you could ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Tom, you've got me, because I just got -- Steve (Mr. Early) just brought in a memorandum for me which I haven't had a chance to read. It's quite long, and it's from Leon Henderson. And if you go over and ask Leon to show you, or give you what is proper out of that memorandum -- I think it's all proper -- you can get the answer.

Q Would Henderson release it to us?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would Henderson release it to us?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't see why not.

MR. EARLY: I will talk to him.

THE PRESIDENT: Steve says he will talk to him first.

Q Mr. President, has the Navy reported inflicting any damage on Axis ships, since they received the 'shoot first' order? Do they believe they have been able to capture or destroy any of them?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I could answer the question, except off the record, because that is a thing we don't talk about. Off the record, the answer is that I don't think so, although maybe some of the people who drop the depth charges do, because I had long experience in the World War. The young men on board ships -- subchasers, and so forth and so on, if you had added up all of the submarines that they sank, it would have been about three times more submarines than the Germans

ever owned.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President, your Civilian Defense Administrator, Mr. LaGuardia, is running for re-election. How do you regard his candidacy?

THE PRESIDENT: If you will ask me that on Friday, I don't want to --probably -- I will probably say something about it, but you have got such a big story, I don't want to ---

MR. T. REYNOLDS: (interposing) (loudly) Thank you, Mr. President.
(laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- push the Mayor.

THE PRESIDENT: Is that right?

MR. GODWIN: Yes. Do they still call them 'ashcans,' the depth charges?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #778,
Executive Offices of the President,
October 24, 1941 -- 10.45 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to wait a minute and see if I can find something which Steve (Mr. Early) says there's a story on. I am not sure whether I can find it or not. (laughter) (looking through papers in his workbasket) That's not it. I guess that's it. I guess I can make something out of it. Yes, that's it. (pause) Just let me take a glance at it. (pause)

Well, now that the Lend-Lease bill has passed both Houses, although it is still in conference, I think it is all right for you to say something about the development and extension of the whole program of -- er -- supplies for our own Army and Navy for the future, and also under Lend-Lease. Studies along this line, the eventual objective of looking ahead as far as is possible, because, as you know, things change all the time. It might be called a comprehensive program -- call it an all-out program. Those studies have been going on for two or three months, and they are of course not ready for presentation as a whole at this time. That will come later. But, in the meantime, in making these studies, there are -- er -- certain items that appear to be of immediate importance in the sense that -- er -- the starting of these particular items was not dependent on the whole program.

One of them, for example, is the question of tanks, and we've agreed on a very great increase of the tank program. I suppose that the tank problem is as good an illustration of what happens in a world

war as anything else.

About -- er -- oh, what? -- a year ago last spring, all of our Army people, with the best information that could be got from the people who are actively fighting against Hitlerism -- er -- caused our experts to lay down a tank program which met with the general approval of everybody -- all the experts both here and abroad. And that program was, of course, immediately undertaken, and is -- I might almost say it's in full swing at the present time. Actual deliveries have been made for a good many months, and we are reaching the -- the -- er -- peak of production in it, according to the original program.

Now, since then, certain factors appeared which nobody could tell about over a year ago. Er -- the use of tanks in certain areas, not necessarily all areas, but certain areas, has become more important relatively than was believed a year and a half ago, and that is why for some time we have been working on this increase in the tank program. The Army will give me the actual -- er -- figures -- er -- request for funds -- er -- of which the tank item is the largest. Many thousands more tanks, and of course in addition, certain other critical items of ordnance that -- er -- relative to tanks, are part of the developing program which I hope to have -- I won't say in final form, because nothing is final, but it is in a fairly complete, rounded picture, but we hope soon this autumn, or possibly the first of January -- the Message to Congress.

I can't give you any actual figures, except that the program on, for instance, tanks, will be vastly greater than it is today, and in other words, it is realistic. It will mean the -- er -- increase of output in existing plants, and will probably mean new plants. These

are known immediate needs of essential ordnance items. And probably the request for this will go up fairly soon, with an appropriation to be put into whatever it is -- the next appropriation bill, whether it is called that or a deficiency bill, or something else.

MR. GODWIN: Can you properly give any figures ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- on existing ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Except that the present program is coming along.

MR. GODWIN: It's in full swing? I mean for the benefit ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) --- of the public, if you could give any figures on tanks or not. That is what I meant.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I think you could say that the program -- er -- will call for about twice the total of the present program.

Q Mr. President, it is not for the public's information what the present program is, is it?

THE PRESIDENT: That is not given out. Just in the same way that O.P.M. the end of this month will cease giving out the totals on airplanes. Merely give the assurance that it is an increase over the last figures.

Q Is this distinct from Lend-Lease?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q This is distinct from Lend-Lease?

THE PRESIDENT: This is distinct from Lend-Lease, Yes.

Q Did this increase grow out of the Russian experience?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did this increase grow out of the Russian experience?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I'd say that it came primarily from experience in North Africa last year -- Cirenaica -- Benghazi, and those places.

Q Mr. President, are there other items going to go up, sort of piecemeal fashion in this way, and then appropriations to cover all of them?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. There will be certain essential things that will go up during the balance of this year, and then the over-all program -- well, probably in my Annual Message, or with the Budget.

Q Well, these first ones will be merely authorizations? They will not be asking for appropriations?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. In other words, we will have to ask the House whether they prefer to put through an authorization bill or an appropriation bill.

Q Mr. President, does this involve any shift from artillery to tanks?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. No. No.

Q Does it affect the size of the Army?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is this in addition to the announcement of Mr. -- testimony of Mr. Knudsen of plans to step up medium tanks from a thousand to two thousand a month, or is this part of that?

THE PRESIDENT: It's part of that, but it will increase that.

Q Mr. President, will the new program include heavy tanks as well?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you that. Somebody would like to know.

Q Mr. President, will there be no figures at all on airplane production after this month?

THE PRESIDENT: No what?

Q No figures at all on airplane production?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No figures at all.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Except, I think, they probably will tell you that it is increasing, and I think they will also tell you whether it is up to the schedule, or behind the schedule. Now of course it's true you've never seen the schedule -- (laughter) -- but -- er -- (he laughs).

Q Mr. President, will deliveries to Europe take precedence over these -- new program?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think there is any question of that.

Q There is any question of what?

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) As to preference.

THE PRESIDENT: Any conflict. That's it.

Q Mr. President, it was just a short time ago that you told us that you were going to give the totals of aircraft production hereafter, but not break it down into categories ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't think we will give you even the totals.

Q I was wondering what was making that change?

THE PRESIDENT: Because it's information that the other side would like to have.

Q Mr. President, the existing tank program is being carried out largely in automobile factories. Does this new program contemplate further conversion of automobile facilities?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, there have been some discussions in the defense agencies of doubling the heavy bomber program too. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That's what they would like to know, too.

Q Mr. President, might it be said that you try to conceal large numbers given you instead of small numbers? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: It reminds me -- I don't know -- I have probably told you this story many times before.

During the World War -- er -- in the spring -- early summer of 1918, we were getting an awful lot of men over to Europe. Of course, they weren't equipped. We all know that. We didn't send any -- any artillery with them, and we didn't send any planes with them, so when they got there they had to be furnished with French or British equipment. Still an awful lot of men to keep secret, and -- er -- we were pretty happy about the whole thing. They were actually being landed.

And we had a policy, as you know, of complete secrecy about numbers, and that lasted all through the -- er -- spring -- early summer of 1918. And everybody was asking the same question: "Why this secrecy? Does it mean an awful lot of men, or are they behind schedule?"

Well, I got over to Paris in early July, and they had a meeting of the -- er -- er -- Inter-Allied Naval Council, and of the Army end of it, and they talked a couple of days as to whether the time hadn't come to do a little boasting. So I was -- somebody else handled the Army end -- and we came out with a big splurge announcing that we had got -- I don't know what it was -- a million and a quarter men, actually in France. And I -- er -- was deputed to receive the French press, and tell them that the Navy, in cooperation with the British and the French, had very greatly cut down on submarine sinkings, and that our Navy had a complete line of anti-submarine aircraft patrol the whole length of

the -- er -- west coast of France -- Bay of Biscay, etcetera.

And the French press came in, and I -- er -- told them the story, and I made it just as big as I possibly could. In other words, the psychological moment had arrived, which made it perfectly clear to Germany that they couldn't win under any possible circumstances. And it's a question of timing. And the thing went through, and of course it leaked back to Germany and probably was done in just about the right way.

Of course I personally had a little episode that was very funny. I received the French press at eleven a.m. in the hotel -- this is all off the record -- it's just a personal story -- er -- eleven a.m. at the Hotel Meurice. And the people in charge of it had prepared one end of the room as a bar, with all the champagne and hors d'oeuvres, etcetera, that you could put on it.

Well, I went in there. It was a great, big room. And the French press arrived at eleven a.m., and they were all in -- er -- full dress suits, with white ties. (laughter) And they weren't the working newspapermen -- a few were -- nearly all of them were the rédacteurs -- the editors -- of the papers, and they were seen. They were having the privilege of being received by 'Monsieur le Ministre.' Apparently it created the most awful furore.

Well, I had a translator there, and started in translating. He couldn't translate it, so I sat on the edge of the table, and in perfectly awful French told the story. "Well," I said, "go ahead and ask questions." Well, that was something that they had never heard of in the newspaper business in France -- asking question of a 'Ministre.' Unheard of. So they asked a few questions, and I answered them as far

as I was allowed to. And then at the end, one of these editors in the full dress suit -- er -- said, "Monsieur le Ministre, is it really true that in Washington the Members of the Cabinet receive the press once a day?" I said, "Yes. Twice a day." (laughter) Whereupon I thought nothing of it.

Next morning I went around to breakfast with old man Clemenceau, and as I went into the room, Clemenceau came at me -- just like a tiger -- with his claws out -- (holding up his hands). He said, "Ah, you overthrow my government. You overthrow my government." (laughter) "You lose the war." Well, I was horrified. I said, "My God, what have I done?" He said, "The French news men, they come -- they want to see me -- they want to see me and my cabinet once a day, and some of them say twice a day." (laughter) "I will resign first." (more laughter) So I darn near overthrew the government and lost the war.

Q Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President, you said you might have something to say about Mayor LaGuardia today.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, yes. I have got it right here. (laughter) I will read it -- I told Steve (Mr. Early) that it could be quoted. It is to be mimeographed for you. You will get it on the way out.

MR. EARLY: It will be.

THE PRESIDENT: (reading):

"Although my voting residence has always been up-State, I have lived and worked in the City of New York off and on since 1904. I have known and observed New York's Mayors since that time. I am not taking part in the New York City election, but --- (laughter) --- what are you all laughing at? --- (more laughter) --- but, because the City of New York

contains about half the population of my State, I do not hesitate to express the opinion that Mayor LaGuardia and his Administration have given to the City the most honest and, I believe, the most efficient municipal government of any within my recollection. The fact that the City election has no relationship to national policies, but is confined to civic policies, is attested by the fact that the Constitution of the State provides for the municipal election in off years, when neither a Governor, nor a President, nor Members of the House of Representatives, or Senate of the United States are to be chosen."

That's all.

Q Mr. President, do you have any additional details on the KEARNY?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet -- for publication. In other words, they are coming in slowly but are not important. Chiefly about technical things ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- Where the explosion probably was, and what damage it was. Things of that kind.

Q Is it permissible to say -- for you to tell us whether it was seriously damaged?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes.

Q It was?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, we have a story that one or two papers issued, about a seaman in Honolulu who said he passed through the Red Sea.

His ship, he said, was subjected to a very severe Nazi bombing. He said that they couldn't hit a bull with a bass fiddle, but indicated that there is a great deal of that in that area. Are you aware of that, or

have you had anything on that line?

THE PRESIDENT: No. The only thing I heard on that was that Hitler had been going to one of the few -- er -- prominent Jews left in Germany, and told him that he could stay, if he would explain to him how Moses managed to get the waters to stand aside and get the Children of Israel across. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Is that a good story? Okay.

Q Mr. President, do you believe that farm products should be exempt from the provisions of the price control bills?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know enough about it. I don't know what the status is at the present time.

Q Mr. President, one of our New York papers published the rumor that Ed Flynn was resigning over this LaGuardia situation.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there is any story in that.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #779,
Executive Office of the President,
October 28, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) I'd get a better chair, Earl.

MR. GODWIN: Look at it spread out.

THE PRESIDENT: You have been putting on weight, you know that?

MR. GODWIN: The more I exercise the more appetite I get. You know how it
is. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: (softly) Let me ask you if you knew Doc O'Connor. Ten
years ago he used to be terribly fat. He's as thin as a rail now. I
asked him how did he do it. He said, "Perfectly simple. I keep my
mouth shut at the table." (laughter) A lot in that.

MR. GODWIN: That's right. (pause) Is that the map? (the President laughs)

Q You will be going up to Hyde Park to vote, I presume?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Friday night.

Q Friday night?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. EARLY: (to the President) You know, Tom (Mr. Tom Reynolds) will be
writing literary pieces as special correspondent very soon.

THE PRESIDENT: What is he studying?

MR. EARLY: He is going to be special correspondent for the new morning
paper in Chicago.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes, that's right. Really? I didn't know that. Gosh!
You had better get out your dictionary. (laughter)

Q All he needs is scissors, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q All he needs is scissors, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter) Any female assistants?

MR. T. REYNOLDS: No. I'm afraid not.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything today, except that it has been brought to my attention that it is the first anniversary of the attack on Greece, one year ago. There isn't very much to be said about it, except that it is another example of a completely unwarranted attack on a small and exceedingly brave nation.

Q Mr. President, have you got a reply yet from Mr. Lewis (John L. Lewis, President of the United Mine Workers of America, C.I.O.) to your letter of last night?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet.

Q Have you written any more letters?

THE PRESIDENT: No. (laughter)

Q Er -- would you care to give any general statements on the situation ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) I don't think so.

Q (continuing) --- that exists now, particularly with reference to the demand up on the Hill that legislation be passed?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news at all at this time.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, I am instructed by the New York Times to ask if you will release for publication that map and document you mentioned last night?

THE PRESIDENT: No. And for a very, very good reason. The map has on it -- it's in my basket at the present time -- (indicating) -- it has on it certain manuscript notations, which if they were reproduced would in all probability disclose how -- where the map came from. And on account of these manuscript notations it might be exceedingly unfair to a number

of people. It might also dry up the source of future information.

Q Mr. President, are the notations in German? (laughter)

Q Mr. President, could you give to us the nations mentioned on the map of the so-called vassal states?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because that might be the same trouble -- same general idea.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, was it ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Fourteen all lumped into five.

Q Fourteen what, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Fourteen -- entirely recreated -- all the boundaries changed. And out of the fourteen come five vassal states.

Q Mr. President, the -- er -- I understand that The Christian Science Monitor for October 22nd printed -- er -- a general plan for eliminating Christianity. They said it came from neutral sources. Is that the same one?

THE PRESIDENT: Steve (Mr. Early) told me about it five minutes ago, and I haven't seen the plan, so I couldn't tell you whether it is similar to, or even identical to the one that I have.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us where the meeting between John L. Lewis and Mr. Taylor (Myron C. Taylor) will take place tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, are there any new details that you could give us on the KEARNY incident?

THE PRESIDENT: Don't think so. I saw photographs of the ship as she was coming into port yesterday, but -- er -- I don't think the Navy Department -- they didn't have anything else yesterday.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Was it listing badly, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Was she listing badly?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) She wasn't listing at all. She was on an even keel. Of course that compartment was flooded, both on the starboard side where she was hit clear through, and on the port side, so the weight of the water was evenly distributed.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us the direction from which the torpedo came?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I could disclose it -- from outside the ship!

(laughter) We don't know. The -- the -- er -- the torpedo, of course, struck pretty well below the water-line, and the effect of the explosion was forward and upward -- (demonstrating with his hands) -- after it hit on the starboard side, about a third of the way from the stern. And the explosion went under and up, so that the deck plates -- in these photographs, on the port side above the engine room -- were blown upward. In other words, it very nearly cut her in two.

Q Then it came from the port ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What? We don't know. It was hit -- she was hit on the starboard side. Now whether it was coming in with a glancing blow from the port, or a glancing blow from the starboard, or straight on -- head on -- I don't know.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I suppose that may come out, because they might have seen the track of the torpedo before it hit her, but we haven't got any of that yet.

Q Was the KEARNY alone at the time, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Was the KEARNY alone at the time, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. She was hunting submarines, in the midst of quite a number of ships that were scattered --or had scattered all over the ocean. Now, whether she was within a mile, or five miles, or ten miles of any ships that were scattered all over the ocean, I don't know.

Q Had the convoy been attacked?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Oh yes. Some hours before.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, the ---

Q (interposing) Were any British ships in that convoy?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, if you have had time to read the German comment -- Berlin comment -- you may have noticed that they were accusing you of having faked the map. They speak of the map as a fraud, a forgery, a fake ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) (picking up some teletype copy from his desk) You people -- if you people haven't had a chance to see it, I will get Steve (Mr. Early) to pin this up.

MR. GODWIN: What's that?

THE PRESIDENT: What? It's the news ticker.

THE PRESIDENT: If you want some good -- er -- good method of improving your vocabulary -- er -- you will find it good stuff that has come out of Berlin today. It's a scream. It's good. I will get Steve to pin it up, because it is really a liberal education for anybody that wants to improve their vocabulary.

Q Do you think it gained in translation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Did it gain in ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of course it sounds better in Germany.

(laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Yes. Let me pursue my question. I won't ask you specifically.

What would you say to the charge of the suspicion that that map was -- had been foisted on you in some way? That it was also a forgery or a fake of some sort?

THE PRESIDENT: Well ---

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) They make that very serious claim.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you know, they made the serious claim about ten days ago that I had torpedoed the KEARNY.

MR. GODWIN: Personally.

THE PRESIDENT: Personally. (laughter) I suppose that is as good an answer as you can make.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Now it comes from a source which is undoubtedly reliable. There is no question about that.

Q Mr. President, have you had occasion to make that map available to the Latin American nations concerned?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Only -- it would only be done in the very strictest confidence.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The kind of a confidence that would be -- I suppose so that they could not trace -- er -- the poor devil that we got it from.

Q Mr. President, regarding the labor situation, aside from the coal mine

incident, have you given consideration to such legislation as compulsory mediation recently, or suspending the rights of strikers?

THE PRESIDENT: If you will -- if you will not be so specific, if you will say -- if you will say legislation and not go any further than that, the answer is in the affirmative.

Q Well, I was interested in those particular ideas, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you about ideas. If you limit it to that, there are probably ten ideas besides your own. It wouldn't be fair.

Q Mr. President, how much time do you think Mr. Lewis should reasonably have to reply to your third request that the mines be opened?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't thought in those terms yet.

Q Mr. President, has the Chief Executive got any power to act in this case, or will it need special legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends on what we decide to do. Of course it will in very large part, as you know, at the present time. One method would not call ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- for the use of any more than existing powers, and another method would call for the use of legislation to implement them. It would be a different method.

Q You speak of existing powers. What are they? Can you tell us?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I will give you a couple of examples. There were two plants that were taken over by the Government lately.

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you think that your powers are adequate?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Now that doesn't mean that I am going to seize all the coal mines. This is just illustration.

Q Do you think that your powers are adequate to deal with the situation --

this coal mine difficulty?

THE PRESIDENT: It depends entirely on the method adopted.

Q Mr. President, would you have authority to take -- say the coal that is above ground in the commercial mines? Would you have authority to take that, and reallocate it to defense industries, in the event there were prolonged shortages in captive mines?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I don't know. We are looking into all those things.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #780,
Executive Office of the President
October 31, 1941 -- 11.00 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: You have had the Navy Department announcement a little while ago. (on the sinking of the U. S. DESTROYER REUBEN JAMES) There has been no further news since that time.

The -- er -- one of the other things I have got is -- last night, very much to my regret, Ambassador Daniels (Josephus Daniels) told me he had to give up his post in Mexico, on account of the condition of Mrs. Daniels' health. And Steve (Mr. Early) will give you the copy of his letter to me, and my letter to him, in which I accept his resignation very, very regretfully, but -- and suggest that before it takes effect, he should return to Mexico to say good-bye to his colleagues and friends, and to the President of Mexico, and the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

I don't know that the country as a whole realizes that of all of the people in the last eight and a half years who have been in foreign posts in Central and South America -- Mexico -- I think that Mr. Daniels probably has done more to encourage and live up to the Good Neighbor Policy than anybody else I know. And today our relations with Mexico are on a basis of understanding and friendship; with a very great improvement, as we all know, over conditions that existed when he went down there in the spring of 1933.

Q Mr. President, anything to say about his successor?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, does the Administration object -- will the Administration

object if the Canadians establish a news service in New York City, similar to the Australian and the British news services there?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I never heard of it.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q At Hyde Park recently, you commented on this Hetch Hetchy power referendum in San Francisco. I am requested now by the San Francisco Examiner to ask whether you are aware that Oakland, Berkeley and Alameda have been given grants to develop power on Federal land ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) -- and sell that power to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I will have to find out. I don't know the details, but I will ask Steve (Mr. Early) to find out, and let you know.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) The general -- the general tenor of what I said at Hyde Park of course was perfectly true -- er -- and that is that the question is living up to the original -- the terms -- the original terms of the charter, or permit -- whatever it was -- when it was first given a great many years ago. That's the issue.

Q Mr. President, is there any possibility of a severance of diplomatic relations with Germany as a result of these sinkings?

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't heard anything about it until you asked the question.

Q Mr. President, now that one of our own warships has now -- has been sunk, is there any difference in our international situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so. Carrying out the duty assigned.

Q Mr. President, there has been a great deal quoted about the expansion

of arms production in this country, and some people have suggested that goals of the program have been doubled, and that output next year will also be doubled. I wonder if you could discuss that matter?

THE PRESIDENT: You would have to come down to brass tacks more than that, before I could discuss it. You mean the whole program?

Q Those are reports that have been coming in from newspapers.

THE PRESIDENT: No. A good many items, which of course will be doubled. That doesn't necessarily mean the whole program.

Q Stacy May, (Director, Bureau of Research and Statistics, O.P.M.) Mr. President, said that it would be stepped up from forty billion dollars to eighty billion dollars, in a speech he recently made.

THE PRESIDENT: I guess he's a little ahead of me. I haven't worked out any ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- figures at all.

Q Have you any information that German submarines have been sunk, or any that you could give out?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't tell you if I did. That was answered by the Secretary of the Navy categorically yesterday.

Q Mr. President, would you like to comment on the theory expressed at the America First Meeting last night, that you could wave a wand and bring peace in Europe?

THE PRESIDENT: I never heard of it.

Q Mr. President, does this mean that if we do actually know that submarines are sunk ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes. You are starting off on the wrong word.

Q Then 'provided.' (laughter)

VOICE: (interjecting) 'Whereas.'

Q (continuing) I was just wondering whether it is the policy that we are going to, (know) when our ships are sunk, and we are not going to (know) when those attacking us are sunk?

THE PRESIDENT: Really -- I think you were here in the World War?

Q I was.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure. Well, you and I remember perfectly well that we didn't announce any casualties to German submarines at any time during the war. We of course did announce casualties to our own ships. For very obvious reasons.

Q Well, we can't keep the secret from Germany, can we?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We can't keep the secret from Germany, can we?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes. We kept the secret from Germany for a long time. That's the point.

Q Mr. President, supposing an American airplane captured a German submarine?

THE PRESIDENT: If! (laughter) We might tell about it, and we might not, immediately. Of course, there are perfectly obvious reasons for that. Everybody knows, when they come to think about it.

I always remember one episode in the World War. I went out -- summer of 1918 -- with -- in a French -- er -- it wasn't -- Yes, a French blimp, out over the Bay of Biscay. We took a ride and I ran the thing. I was sitting in an armchair, and pulled a stick up and down, and turned a wheel right or left. Anyone of you could have run it -- it was perfectly fascinating. We were up four or five hundred feet above the surface. I was out a couple of hours.

And the next day, that -- I had gone -- that same blimp thought she saw -- er -- the shape of a submarine, way down on the bottom -- off a place called Penmarch Point. Well, there had been a German submarine operating off there -- oh, for several months -- and she had sunk quite a lot of ships that were going into the mouth of the Loire river. And everybody was trying to get her. She would be on station a week or ten days, and then go back to Germany and refuel; then return to Penmarch Point.

This blimp saw this shape, down on the bottom about a hundred feet below the water, and dropped a buoy over it, came back, and one of the planes went out and -- er -- dropped depth charges. And I think some of the sub-chasers went out and dropped depth charges all around the buoy.

Well, some oil came up, and the people who had done it said, "Hey. We've got a submarine. We've sunk a submarine." Well, of course, we were awfully, awfully careful, and we didn't claim that submarine at all. It wasn't claimed as a 'get.'

After the war was all over -- months later -- they sent some divers down, and sure enough it was a submarine -- they got her. But we didn't know at the time.

Now, of course, obviously, the Germans didn't know what had happened to that ship either. She might have been wrecked. She might have been sunk. She might have been captured. The fact was that she was missing, and that's all that Germany knew. Which, of course, had a pretty -- a pretty -- an -- er -- important effect on the morale of the crews of other submarines. It just didn't come home.

Q Mr. President, do you think that Germany has any reason to wonder about

some of the submarines that have been in contact with our --- (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Go to a good psychologist.

Q Mr. President, are you going to recommend legislation Federalizing the Unemployment Compensation benefit system this -- er -- Session?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. There will be a Social Security message, as I think I said a couple of weeks ago, but it isn't ready yet.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Various kinds of Social Security.

Q And it does mean Federalizing Unemployment Compensation?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know yet.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Some of the States, like Wisconsin, think they have an even better scheme than the Federal scheme; and it has been worked out on percentages of accidents, etcetera, and percentages of unemployment. They very much resent the idea of complete uniformity in Federalization. Is there going to be any exception made on States that have experimented with this sort of thing?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you on Wisconsin, Jim, because I don't know enough about it, but ---

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interposing) So do I.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. J. WRIGHT: So do I. (laughter)

VOICE: (aside) Ask me.

THE PRESIDENT: There is one thing that I think can be said. On the subject of Social Security, not just Unemployment Insurance, but Old Age Pensions, and so forth -- er -- if you make uniformity for all the States, you help those that have, and you don't help those that have not got the wherewithal. And it results in the richer States being

able to pay a great deal more than some of the States that are relatively poor in their taxable values. And -- er -- this -- what we are working on at the present time is a method -- er -- which will give more Federal aid to the -- a great deal more Federal aid to the States that haven't got the riches -- er -- on some kind of a standard basis, which probably would take the form of the per capita income of the population of the different States.

In a couple of weeks, probably, we will be going to Georgia, an illustration of a State that is large in area, large in population, and very low in taxable values, and very low in the -- er -- yearly -- er -- per capita income. Obviously, they ought to have -- this has nothing to do with their State government, or their legislature, but they obviously ought to have more Federal aid than the State of New York, which has an -- an infinitely higher -- er -- yearly per capita income, and that -- that is probably what the basis of the recommendations are going to be.

Q Mr. President, is there anything new to be said on the subject of recommendations on anti-strike legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No news on that today. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, would you say that the strike situation by and large is getting better or getting worse?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- I -- I haven't had any figures on for two or three weeks.

Q (interposing) Were you ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It isn't as bad as it was at one time. It's a little worse than it was recently. But what the percentages of slow-up caused by strikes are at the present time, I will have to get the

figures. And, of course, there is also in some individual cases --
er -- not a strike but a slow-up.

Q Mr. President, is there any agency, or are there any individuals in the Government who can be appealed to, to speed up decisions by some of these -- er -- other Governmental agencies?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't quite follow.

Q Well -- er -- put it this way. A defense industry in the City of Toledo ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q A defense industry in a city -- call it Toledo -- has been held up --
er -- for lack of water and sewers. Applications for funds to build these facilities have been pending for over a hundred days, with no decision from here.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, I don't -- I never heard the individual case of Toledo, but it may be some of the facts ----. You mean to say the plant can't run? Is it proved that the plant can't run unless they put a new sewer in?

Q The construction can't go forward until the sewer and waterlines are built.

THE PRESIDENT: I wish you would check on the story, because I have had a number of cases where -- I am not saying anything against Toledo -- this had better be off the record -- I have had other cases brought to my attention, where a community was trying to get a new water system, or a new school, or a new hospital -- all kinds of things. Said they could not start the plant until they got it, where the actual facts were just the reverse. And they were trying to get something from the Government for nothing, where they really could have got along under

their own steam in putting through these additional facilities.

And there are a lot of communities that are trying to get things, on the -- on the ground that the Government is going to make it a defense area, etcetera. One community I happen to know very well tried to get a new hospital the other day because -- er -- there were three or four plants in the region that were turning out -- er -- defense articles, and -- er -- the total additional population of the community had risen from forty thousand to forty thousand three hundred. And now of course you can't get a new hospital because the population has risen three hundred people. They were trying to get something for nothing. I don't know because that -- maybe it's all right.

Q Mr. President, my interest is not whether or not they are entitled to it, but whether it should take a hundred days. It has been cleared by the Defense Public Works for over seventy days. Now it has been in the Budget over a month, without any decision.

THE PRESIDENT: There must be something phoney in the particular case. In other words I am sure it wouldn't have happened.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #781,
Held in the President's Study
In the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library
Monday, November 3, 1941 -- 12.45 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Well?

Q Good morning, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: You can't have this today. (indicating statement) For
Wednesday morning release, I understand the pictures -- the films were
put on it.

Q Is it good?

THE PRESIDENT: It's not very startling. I just dictated a few words. I
don't know what I am going to say this afternoon, but I dictated a
few thoughts just now to use this afternoon. I don't think they will
let you people in, will they, in the high school?

Q I imagine so.

Q Sure hope so.

Q We haven't heard.

THE PRESIDENT: I think they only let high school graduates in. (laughter)
Maybe you have your certificates with you. It's all right.

Q We have been drinking Poughkeepsie water, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That would admit you to almost anything.

I don't think I have got any news at all. Bill, have I got any-
thing? Where's Bill?

MR. HASSETT: Here, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Have I got anything at all?

MR. HASSETT: Just your own thoughts.

Q (interposing) Can you ---

THE PRESIDENT: No. I shall just put them on paper.

Q Have you any thoughts on your meeting with the Prime Minister? (Mackenzie King of Canada)

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing more than what he said.

Q That was pretty scanty, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That was quite scanty.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q He said 'anything and everything.'

Q He said he had a 'profitable visit,' Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That is perfectly true.

Q (interposing) Could you elaborate ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't think -- I don't think either I can elaborate, or that you can elaborate. I saw somebody's elaboration in the papers this morning. It just wasn't true, but that's one of the penalties of elaborating, Fred! (laughter)

MR. FRED PASLEY: There's a story behind that, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: That's what I call space-filling.

Q Did you -- did you reach any concrete agreement with the Prime Minister this time, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well -- and incidentally there wasn't any conference. Of course, Bill tried to tell you that today, but nobody believed it. You all do know that there wasn't any conference. (he laughs)

Q We had to write about something.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We had to write about something.

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, sure.

Q Well, Mr. President, could you say whether you think there has been any greater bond of understanding established, or ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Continuing bond. (laughter) That doesn't help at all.

Q Not much.

Q Mr. President, I would like to ask a question, off the record if necessary.

Lots of people who think just as you do on this war issue, also think that a continuance of diplomatic relations with Germany is a form of dishonesty. Could you elaborate your thoughts for background?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Only off the record. I would have to make it completely off the record.

As you know, we have taken the position -- the Secretary of State was repeating it the other day -- that we are actually and truly only acting on the defense. That's all. That is literally true on all the oceans, and various other places. There are a great many other things to support that, that haven't come out.

Well, I can -- you can't use this, but as an intimation, one of the dispatches this morning showed a very definite attempt on the part of Germany to establish itself, by the infiltration method, in a funny little place called Liberia. Well, that's a thing we can't use, because the -- the Liberian government realizes exactly what the purpose was -- establishing an airline down there. Well, Liberia, of course, is awfully close to South America. It's just another step. And it depends entirely on how you like to look at it. Is it an attack, or isn't it? In one sense it is an attack, because it is the first stage of the development of German control, probably down to a point directly opposite South America.

And as I say, there are constant instances of trying to spread their power all over the world which are not 'shooting' down there, but it's a very definite attempt to attack the Americas. You know the point of view. And naturally we are resisting for the purpose of our own defense, and hemisphere defense. Things of that kind.

And the question always arises here. We don't want a declared war with Germany because we are acting in defense -- self-defense -- every action. And to break off diplomatic relations, why, that won't do any good. I really frankly don't know that it would do any good. It might be more useful to keep them the way they are.

Q There is the thought that in that way the situation would be brought home very directly to the American people.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think the American people understand it pretty well.

After all, in days like this, you don't -- you don't do things for the sake of the record. And that is about all it would be.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Why can't stuff like that Liberian incident be published, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, because, Frank, it isn't the time to do it. Publishing things of this kind is a question of timing, as you will probably see in the course of the next two or three days.

Q Mr. President, this -- there isn't any more you could say about this New York Mayoralty contest, is there? They seem to be doing some awfully harsh talking down there?

THE PRESIDENT: A lot of hard talking. I got one report yesterday ---

Q (interposing) Is this on the record?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, this is on the record. I got a report yesterday that there was a story in New York that I had repudiated what I had said

about the Mayor. And that -- that story was being circulated. Of course there is absolutely nothing, not one word or vestige of truth in it. I think that is all.

Q Really? I don't believe the report was published.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I don't believe the report was published.

THE PRESIDENT: No. I got it over the telephone from two different places.

Q Oh, oh.

Q Mr. President, is there any comment you would like to make on that thing of mud-slinging instead of issues down there?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q Mud-slinging down there instead of issues?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I said I was taking no part in the campaign. Everybody knows what I said.

Q Are you going to touch on any local issues this afternoon in your speech, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Not local issues. I am going to talk about a thing in education that I have always talked about a great deal, and this morning a little bit that way. I have talked about it for thirty years, and that is: giving the boys and girls in high school a little bit more firsthand knowledge of how, and where, and why the wheels go round.

I am going to use -- I think Bill can give you a -- I don't know that I will follow copy, so you people will have to check me on it.

Of course, what I dictated this morning is just very rough -- ideas.

I'll use an illustration of the fact that the average boy and girl doesn't know anything about the procedure of local law. They don't know what a Justice of the Peace does, what his duties are. They don't

know what the police force does in Poughkeepsie -- we hope. They don't know what the County Court does. They don't know what the Supreme Court in Poughkeepsie does. They have never been in a courtroom.

Well, that happened to me. I always think of my own experience. I got through school, and college, then went three years to a law school, and was duly admitted to the Bar of the State of New York. And in 1907, or in there somewhere, I went into a great big law office as a sort of a glorified office boy.

And the day after I got there I was told to go up to the court and answer a calendar call. Now, mind you, I was a full-fledged lawyer, duly certified. I didn't know what a calendar call was. I had never been in a courtroom, and yet I was a lawyer. Never been in a courtroom. And then the next day I was sent up to record a deed in the County Clerk's Office. Well, I hadn't the foggiest idea about the recording of a deed. I had to learn all those practical things. Never been in a County Clerk's Office. I had never been in a big factory, mind you, at the age of -- what? -- 25. Didn't know what a factory meant, where the stuff came from and the different individual processes, and the assembly processes, and the selling processes. Had to learn that long after I had graduated and was in a profession.

I am going to use some of these examples this afternoon. The general idea that in the high schools -- take this County as a perfectly good example, it is a practical thing to take around high school students and let them see the wheels go round. Of course, the County highway system, the Sanitation, County health people, what a Surrogate's Office is. Some of them haven't the faintest idea what a

Surrogate's Office does, and so forth and so on. What a department store is and how you run it, And going back to my old example -- in the spring of 1933, what a bank is, what happens to your money when you put it in the bank. A great many people still think they put it in the safe until you call for it.

Q What does a Surrogate's Office do?

THE PRESIDENT: What did you say?

Q What does a Surrogate's Office do? (laughter) I want to be there for that.

THE PRESIDENT: You will never get there until you are dead. It's all right.

Q You mean, Mr. President, we are going to qualify them for Information Please -- our school children?

THE PRESIDENT: Right. A very good idea.

Q Mr. President, to come back to the international situation, it seems to be pretty well established that the statement the other night from Germany that America has declared a shooting war on the Reich comes from Mr. Hitler himself. Is there any Presidential reaction to such a statement as that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know except what I read in the papers.

Q Is there any more on the REUBEN JAMES, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Nothing. There wasn't last night. I haven't talked this morning.

Q Mr. President, the Neutrality Law revision is moving toward the end.

Are you going to ask your Congressional leaders to speed up this Price Control?

THE PRESIDENT: I think we will probably talk about it on Wednesday morning.

They are coming in then.

Q Did you discuss with Mr. King (Prime Minister Mackenzie King of Canada) how his Price Control plan is working?

THE PRESIDENT: The trouble is this, that if I said I talked about that, it wouldn't be a fair thing to lift out of the general conversation. We talked about anything. I think he said 'anything and everything.' (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, are you going to vote? About the usual hour tomorrow morning, I mean.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. We haven't worked it out yet. I think Mrs. Roosevelt and I will go up there about, I would say, eleven or twelve o'clock.

Q Yes, sir. I don't assume you have anything much to say about the local election campaigns?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I can't say anything out loud about it. But for your own private information, Mr. Van ^[Wagoner] Wagoner (Elmer Van Wagoner) -- I think he has been an awfully good Supervisor of the Town. We got -- we got two people that are running for Superintendent of Highways, and they are both named Marshall, isn't that right?

Q Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: I hope the Marshall who --- (laughter) --- is in now will stay in, because I think the roads are -- I drive over them a great deal -- they are in better shape than I have seen them for a long time.

Q Those two Marshalls, Mr. President -- regarding those two Marshalls, did you ever hear about the time Tuxedo Park voted unanimously the Socialist Ticket? They got a new voting machine, and the handle of the Socialist came down over the Republican. They all voted wrong. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I love it. (laughter)

AcB 11-2-56

Q Mr. President, we were looking over some of the exhibits out there, while we were waiting. How is the Library (Franklin D. Roosevelt Library) getting along? Lots of people coming up?

THE PRESIDENT: Getting along. Much larger attendance than we had expected. I think the figure for the first four months was about 40,000. Am I right on that? Who knows? Where is Shipman?

MR. SHIPMAN: Yes, sir about 40,000.

Q Is that total for the first four months?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And of course Mr. Shipman is getting a little bit worried because the -- there are so many more things that we are getting, that we are already faced, or will be soon, with the question of space -- adequate space. Of course there are -- a great many people don't realize it, but the space we have will fill up very quickly from material that is now in Washington for about six or seven million manuscripts. Of course the general public doesn't see the manuscripts.

Q What are those, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q In a general way?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I would say -- those manuscripts I would say are not only mine, but papers that I have been associated with -- started back in 1910. Three -- nearly three years in Albany. Then after that, the Navy files through 1920. And then, of course, a great many political files, like the campaign of 1920, and the Madison Square campaign in 1924, and the Houston campaign in 1928. And then my campaign in 1928 for Governor, and the four years of Albany papers. Then, of course, the -- the White House files. Then all you have to do on that is to go

downstairs in the White House and look at what hasn't come up yet. There is an awful lot hasn't come up, but a great many already in the stack. Then, of course, besides that, there are a very large number of my own books, and those are in the stack too.

Q (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And those are constantly being added to. For instance, we are getting a great many supplementary dovetailing documents and reports from different parts of the Government. Just for example, I got a telephone call yesterday from Dr. Buck, who has been the Archivist, who has been given, for permanent keeping, the old Navy Department files. They haven't got room in the Navy Building any more for them -- the files go back to the French war, and Tripoli War, and the War of 1812. And for -- as soon as Doctor Buck gets them, he is going to have them micro-filmed.

Q That's the new system?

THE PRESIDENT: That's the new system. Have them all micro-filmed, and as I understand it, he will -- I think three copies. They will keep one in a different part of the Archives Building, and they will put another one in the Navy Department Building. And they will send one copy up here, so that if anything should ever happen to the originals, we should still have the micro-film. Of course they take up a certain amount of room.

And then -- well, there are a lot of things. Remember N.R.A.? Well, those files are down in Washington. They oughtn't to come here, but the more important N.R.A. files are going to be micro-filmed and bring the copy up here, because a lot of this dovetails in with my papers. So any student would be able to get here a pretty large portion

of everything that has been connected with the Administration, and not have to run around all over the place to get something here or something there.

Q There's a slight argument ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q There's a slight argument among the boys this morning on how old is the tree in front, out there, that is chained up -- the limbs?

THE PRESIDENT: I think -- the story has been printed, but it is rather an interesting one. I had a tree man here about twenty years ago with a similar tree, about the same age.

And he counted the rings and figured out that the tree started to grow about 1640, which is three hundred years, and then he advanced the extremely interesting theory -- the tree obviously grew under field conditions. In other words, not in a forest -- in those early years -- because the lower limbs started out at a very low level, and branched out fifty or more feet on all sides of the tree. So it must have been an open space. It meant necessarily almost that this was a field, and if it was a field, then it was an Indian field. Therefore there was an Indian encampment, or village, right here.

Q In other words, an accidental tree grew, so to speak?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It had to grow up under field conditions, and the only fields in the East in those days were Indian cultivated fields. Everywhere else were woodlands.

Q Is that a hickory?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What is that tree? Oh, I'm sorry.

THE PRESIDENT: White oak. They are all white oaks. And I think it is

rather an interesting thing. Of course, we find all kinds of arrowheads. Right on the drive we dug up a deer bone -- a shin bone that had been made into a needle. And we have quite a lot of arrowheads and things like that that are dug up. It's rather good.

Q Yes it is.

Q Isn't it one of our oldest parts of America up here -- in terms of history then?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q In terms of Revolutionary history?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes. This County did not get settled until 1690, something like that, so it couldn't have been a white man's field. It must have been an Indian's field. Of course the other side of the river was settled about 1640, over in Ulster County.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Mr. President, have you decided when you are going to send a request to Congress for the vastly increased tank production, about which you talked a fortnight ago?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know, Tom.

MR. T. REYNOLDS: You haven't got to the point where you will use your draft then?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet.

Q That is just a part of the general raising of the sights?

THE PRESIDENT: Raising what?

Q Raising the sights of the defense program?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, part of the whole thing. Yes. There isn't any time being lost, because of course there are still -- they have allocated, but they are still awarding actual contracts on some of the old money. It isn't all actually contracted for yet.

Q Mr. President, it is probably all right to mention those two candidates?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think so. Only just on the ground that they have been very good in their jobs.

Q There will be no news today, Mr. President, on other candidates, will there?

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Did Tom (Mr. T. Reynolds) have a good birthday on Saturday night?

Q Yes, indeed, Mr. President.

Q It was last night, Mr. President, that the party ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Continuing?

Q Yes, sir. Very good.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #782,
Executive Office of the President,
November 7, 1941 -- 10.45 A.M.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. Hassett of the secretariat! They speak of him as Mr.

Hassett of the White House secretariat!

THE PRESIDENT: Do they? What do they call him Judge for?

MR. GODWIN: He looks like it.

THE PRESIDENT: There are a lot of criminals that look like Judges, you know. (laughter)

MR. J. HENRY: Mr. President, we have a successor to Tom Reynolds.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. J. HENRY: We have a successor to Tom Reynolds here this morning.

(introducing him to the President): This is Mr. Smith.

MR. MERRIMAN SMITH: How are you, Mr. President?

MR. J. HENRY: He doesn't take up quite as much room.

THE PRESIDENT: By the way, when does the publication start? (the new Chicago morning newspaper)

Q First of December.

THE PRESIDENT: What are they going to call it?

Q It hasn't been decided.

MR. DONALDSON: All in. ✓

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have got anything, except that I didn't want to give this out outside. I might as well read it to you. It's quite short. And incidentally there isn't any other information, so that will serve you then. (reading):

"The President said today that the Government of the United States is giving consideration to the question of withdrawal of the American

Marine detachments now maintained ashore in China, at Peiping, Tientsin and Shanghai." And that is all -- literally.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what our forces are over there? I heard that there were six hundred men in Shanghai.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment on the Railroad Wage Report?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to ask Railroad Management, and Labor, to accept the decision of your Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't got any news on it at all.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, is there any news on the -- on the probable new labor legislation you spoke about?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Do you still think there is need now for it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you think that a fifteen percent payroll tax to avert inflation is necessary now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, a great many people are suggesting that the status quo, as to the closed shop conditions, be adopted for the period of this emergency, as in the World War. Have you any comment to make on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No. You're having a bad time today. (he laughs)

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, has it -- has it at any time -- the presence of the Marines in China been a subject of conversation between this Government and Japan?

THE PRESIDENT: I told you.

MR. GODWIN: That is old stuff. Is that all on that?

THE PRESIDENT: As a matter of conversation between us and Japan?

MR. GODWIN: Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: No. Never has.

MR. G. DURNO: Mr. President, a high naval authority reports that the patrol has already disposed of 42 Nazi submarines.

THE PRESIDENT: Who did that?

MR. G. DURNO: A high naval authority.

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

MR. G. DURNO: My office didn't tell me what his name was.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh! (laughter) That's a grand story. And that -- that -- that particular question -- reply is so good that it is going to go down in the papers of the President, which Sam Rosenman will edit sometime in the future. So you have become historic.

Q Will you mention the name of the reporter?

THE PRESIDENT: Sure, if he will give it to me.

Q George Durno.

Q George Durno.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh! (laughter) George, you're going in Sam's book. It's all right.

MR. G. DURNO: Without an answer? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No charge! (more laughter)

Q Mr. President, will the withdrawal of the Marines in China bring any new status of the American situation over there?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't -- you heard what I said 'fust.'

Q Mr. President, have you received any indication that Finland may withdraw

from the war?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. Unless something came in during the night. We have had absolutely nothing on it except what I read in the papers this morning.

Q Mr. President, can you say anything about agricultural price ceilings?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so.

Q How about a ceiling on wages, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any information on it at all.

Q Mr. President, just to make another try, what interpretation should we put on your first speech that you gave us this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't. (laughter) I wouldn't try to interpret, because you know it is a grave question as to whether interpretation is news.

Q It passes for it sometimes. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) When I used to edit a paper, interpretation was generally considered a duty of the editorial desk, but of course, times have changed a great deal. (he laughs)

Q Any idea ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (continuing) --- how many civilians are in those cities in China?

THE PRESIDENT: In what?

Q Do you know how many American civilians are in those cities?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't know. Of course, they have all had -- I think on more than one occasion -- the suggestion that unless it is imperative for personal reasons that they stay -- that they wish to stay -- that they should return. That has been done several times in more than one instance.

Q Mr. President, this doesn't affect the question of extra territoriality ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q This doesn't affect our interest in the concessions in China?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't know. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, did you have any advance inquiries regarding Mr. Litvinov
(newly appointed Russian Ambassador to the U.S.) this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think several days ago they asked for the usual
agreement through the State Department, to take it to me, and of course
this was given later on.

Q Will Mr. Oumansky come back?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will Mr. Oumansky come back?

THE PRESIDENT: That I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the possible future of the
Omnibus Harbors and Rivers bill, whether it will go up to Congress ---

THE PRESIDENT: What kind of a service?

Q The Omnibus Rivers and Harbors bill. That is where you put the St.
Lawrence Waterway.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know what the status on the Hill is. Of course, I
have told them -- it is a perfectly simple thing -- that I am not
particularly concerned over authorizations on projects which are not
defense projects. In other words, the building up of a pool of things
to be done, to take care of the shift-over from defense conditions to
peacetime conditions. Now whether this bill has authorizations in it
or not, I am not sure. On the other -- the St. Lawrence power end of
things is a very vital defense need, and it should be not only authorized,
but it should be appropriated for, because it is a vital defense need.

Q Does that mean it will be taken out of the Omnibus bill?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Does that mean it will be taken out of the Omnibus bill that we put through? It would be taken out?

THE PRESIDENT: No. As I say, I don't know whether the Omnibus bill contains mere authorizations or not. If it contains only authorizations, it would have to be supplemented by an appropriation bill for those projects which are of a defense character.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, there are -- there are some Congressmen who have supported the St. Lawrence for some time, who now say they are going to vote against it, because they think this is a pork barrel bill, and they don't think a large appropriation should be made. Do you have any comment on that story?

THE PRESIDENT: What is the bill? Tell me what it is? Is it an authorization bill?

MR. P. BRANDT: Yes. It's an authorization bill, that's right.

THE PRESIDENT: Only?

MR. P. BRANDT: That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: That's a perfectly simple thing, as I said before. If these projects of all kinds -- defense -- peacetime projects are authorized by the Congress, that doesn't start them to work.

MR. P. BRANDT: It doesn't what?

THE PRESIDENT: It doesn't start the projects to work. I wish all of you could clear up for the general public -- it isn't generally understood, it isn't even understood in Washington -- that an authorization bill doesn't start anything. You have got to have money.

MR. P. BRANDT: The first step though?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. P. BRANDT: It's the first step though?

THE PRESIDENT: Not necessarily, Pete. We have got something like -- between two and three billion dollars worth of authorizations that date back -- I don't know, what? -- to the time of John Quincy Adams, something like that -- a hundred years -- flocks and flocks. I think it would take a whole -- it would take twenty pages in a newspaper to list all the authorizations that have been made by the Congress of the United States which have never been implemented with appropriations. And people don't understand, through the country, that an authorization bill doesn't by any means start the project going. You have got to have a subsequent appropriation.

Q But you have to have the authorizations before you get the appropriation?

THE PRESIDENT: That's right, yes. That's why I was asking to find out whether this Omnibus bill is an authorized bill, or whether any of the items carry an appropriation.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It is a very, very distinct thing. People in this country have never understood it. I think it is up to you to enlighten the country.

Q If there are hundreds of billions of dollars -- or I think you said something like that -- of projects that have been authorized, that must mean that many unworthy projects are authorized?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. They have been in the past, that is perfectly true, in the light of subsequent events. I suppose there were among those authorizations in the old days -- for instance, there were quite a number of canals that had depths of -- what? -- six feet. Well, of course, as

time went by, they became completely out of date.

Q Mr. President, as a matter of fact, haven't you the power under the emergency to block the bill, or prevent any project that Congress actually appropriates for?

THE PRESIDENT: Appropriates for?

Q Yes. I mean through the priorities?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, but it has got to go to the second stage of the Congress.

Q Mr. President, do you regard the Florida Ship Canal as a defense project?
That is in the bill.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, things are always relative. I wouldn't say that, from the point of view of defense, it is in the first priority, but I think the St. Lawrence power is. We all know that there are shortages of power, both on the Canadian side of the St. Lawrence, and on the American side of the St. Lawrence.

Q Mr. President, any idea, ---

Q (interposing) In the face of anything else, are you willing to have appropriated money for the St. Lawrence now?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, certainly, because we need it.

Q Mr. President, the -- the third largest project in that bill is the canalization of the Beaver and Mahoning Rivers in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Do you consider that a defense project?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you definitely. I think it is. I think it has been listed as one of the principal things we need for the steel industry in that part, but you had better check. I am not dead sure.

Q Where could that be checked?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Where could that be checked? At the Rivers and Harbors Committee?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I would check with the National Resources. I would check with the O.P.M. I would check with the Wallace Committee. Frankly I don't know. You will have to dig that up yourself.

Q Mr. President, you spoke of the power aspects of the St. Lawrence. Do you also want immediately to start on the Seaway aspect?

THE PRESIDENT: If it is possible, yes. But it isn't of as great importance at this particular time as the power end of it.

Q Mr. President, do you have any idea when there will be a decision on this Marines withdrawal?

THE PRESIDENT: This what?

Q When there will be a decision on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Has it been under consideration for some time?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't tell you.

Q Thank you.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #783,
Executive Office of the President,
November 14, 1941 -- 10.50 A.M.

(Press Conference was not held on Armistice Day, Tuesday, November 11, 1941)

Q Does it look like Warm Springs tomorrow?

THE PRESIDENT: Unpack.

Q You are packed?

THE PRESIDENT: I said unpack.

Q Unpack? Not at all?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Not at all?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes. I hope so, later. As soon as I can.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: You who are headed for a certain famous cottage in Warm Springs tomorrow night, I think you might unpack for a few days, because I will not be able to get off, partly because of a lot of things happening, and number two, because my nose is not quite settled yet. It's a bit blocked.

Q (interposing) Do you think ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) But I hope to go down -- get down as soon as I can.

Q Do you think you will get there for Thanksgiving?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, have you any plans to confer with the new Japanese envoy (Saburo Kurusu) when he comes?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet. He gets here tomorrow.

Q Yes.

Q Mr. President, when you do go down there, do you expect to go to Fort Benning?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't thought of any plans at all.

Q Mr. President, in regard to Mr. Kurusu's visit, do you think the American people realize the emergency in the Far East?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q You think they do?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Mr. President, have you signed the Act of yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Because the Vice President cannot sign it in the absence of the Senate, and he won't be able to sign it until Monday, when they meet.

Q I see.

Q Mr. President, do you think anybody over-rates the seriousness of the Far Eastern situation?

THE PRESIDENT: That is awfully difficult to know. It's a difficult question to answer. What do you mean by 'seriously'? What do you mean by 'over-rate'?

Q There is going to be war?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That there might be war?

THE PRESIDENT: I sincerely trust not.

Q Mr. President, will Mr. Kurusu's first call be at the State Department?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Ask -- ask the Protocol.

Q Mr. President, can you give us a preview of your meeting this morning with the coal and steel people?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. (laughter)

Q In your letter yesterday to Speaker Rayburn, in the part of it that dealt with the coal situation, you made no mention of the possibility of labor legislation. Is that still a possibility?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q That's an awful short answer to a long question.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter)

Q (interposing) Mr. President, do you have ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) That's all it rates.

Q Do you have authority for the Government to take over these captive mines?

I think there has been some dispute whether or not ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) That's a hypothetical question at the present time. I think it's probably better not asked or answered.

Q Mr. President, do you have any plans you could discuss publicly about changing ship routes now?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no.


Q (aside) Ship routes.

Q Mr. President, could -- could you tell us how you think war between Japan and the United States could be avoided? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I could -- if I said No on that, somebody might use what they call interpretation, and if I said Yes on it, it would be pure guess, absolutely pure guess. I don't know. You don't know. No interpreter knows.

Q Mr. President, do you have any plans for dealing with defense housing?

THE PRESIDENT: I am working on that at the present time -- talking to the Congressional people at the present time, and it's a terribly complex question, because we have tried now for a number of years to give better



living conditions for people in cities and on farms. It isn't just a question of slum clearance, because there aren't any, in one sense. There aren't any slums in the agricultural districts, and yet the living conditions in agricultural districts, many of them, may be relatively as bad as city slums.

And now in -- in emergency war housing, there is always the problem as to how much we could -- we should continue the elimination of very bad living conditions -- housing conditions. Every time that we try to improve that, we run up against the question of permanency, as to whether we will build buildings that will last for a good long time.

At the same time we have certain emergency matters in -- in communities that have been, on a percentage basis, very highly affected by new plants, and new workers moving in. And that means planning. Are we going to build for them the kind of temporary residences that will not last, after the emergency is over, that are done deliberately with the idea that they will be torn down afterwards -- or fall down -- or shall we make it more permanent?

Well, that calls for a guess, the best guess one can make, as to whether that influx of population into a given community is going to be more or less permanent or not.

We have had certain -- we have had, for instance, the U.S.H.A. (U. S. Housing Administration), which has done permanent housing, very excellent permanent housing. How far shall we go on with that and continue, always -- always trying to recognize defense housing needs?

At the same time we have three or four different agencies that are doing temporary emergency housing. Probably in the past it's been not a bad thing to have these different agencies, because in a sense they are

checking against each other, they are competing against each other, both on the price and on the material -- I mean the type of materials. Probably the Army and Navy will pretty well come to an end of their own participation in defense housing. And I think we will be able to get, after what might be called an experimental period, a greater unity and fewer different agencies in housing construction of the temporary type. It seems probable that the more permanent type of defense housing could continue to be made by U.S.H.A. Well, that's about all. There isn't very much of a story today, but I think that we are working toward a greater unification in the temporary housing.

Q That is, ultimately, there will be two setups, the U.S.H.A. for permanent housing, and consolidating temporary housing?

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, how would this Government look upon any attempt to close the Burma Road?

THE PRESIDENT: There are too many -- too many other factors involved for me to answer the question.

(Mr. Hassett hands a paper to the President)

THE PRESIDENT: Who is this from? Is that ready to have this announced?

MR. HASSETT: It just came to me without any identification, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Who put the question mark on it?

MR. HASSETT: I did.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. (laughter) Well, this has just come over from, what do you suppose it is -- State Department?

MR. HASSETT: I suppose it -- it was handed to me. I don't know where it came from.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know the source of it, but I know it is approximately

correct, as it didn't have any question mark on it till Bill got hold of it. I see no reason why I shouldn't read it to you:

(reading): "The Government of the United States has decided to withdraw the American Marine detachments now maintained ashore in China, at Peiping, Tientsin, and Shanghai. It is expected that the withdrawal will begin shortly."

Q Does that take all Marines we have in China now, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Can you tell us where they will go?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Singapore?

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) I notice that says 'Marines ashore'?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q They will stay there on the water?

THE PRESIDENT: What? Marines ashore? I don't get it.

Q Mr. President, does this affect our forces on the Yangtze -- on gunboats?

THE PRESIDENT: I can't hear you.

Q I say, does this affect our gunboats on the Yangtze river?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Those are naval forces. They are not Marines.

Q Mr. President, do you place any credence to the speculation that has been written about the withdrawal of these Marines? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to have a sign -- I am going to place it right behind me: "Don't Interpret."

Q Mr. President, does this withdrawal leave any -- does this withdrawal leave any American interests unprotected?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't know. What do you mean? There are several

hundred American interests in the shape of missionaries and business firms scattered all over China, and these Marines have been in one place. I suppose in one sense that there are buildings, and some Americans, still left in China, and the presence of Marines there has protected them in one sense, but that is just one little place. I don't think that it is a very intelligent thing to write about.

Q Mr. President, one thing that has been widely published and credited is that difficulties about Japanese demands in China in a general way are holding up any agreement. Is that correct, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No.

Q Mr. President, does the withdrawal of the Marines in any way affect our --

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) The question and the answer are not worth putting down. It wouldn't mean anything.

Q Does the withdrawal of Marines in any way affect our interests in the International Settlement?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask the Secretary of State about that, because my impression is that we have no treaty rights in the International Settlement, in the sense of setting up an American zone. The British have. The French have. And I think the Japs have -- by treaty. I don't think we have.

Q Mr. President, now that Mr. Daniels has returned, could you tell us when you will be naming a new ambassador to Mexico, and who it might be?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing on that yet.

Q Mr. President, may I ask a question on the Neutrality Law which came up, I remember, and that is would you be able to comment on how valuable you feel the revision of the Law is toward our efforts to defeat the Axis?

THE PRESIDENT: Do what?

Q To comment on how valuable you feel the revision of the Law is, in the efforts to defeat the Axis?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I think you can use what I sent up in that letter yesterday. I have got it from the operational point of view. It is very valuable.

Q Mr. President, do you feel that the close vote in the House indicates a disunity, rather than a unity?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I do not.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #784,
Executive Office of the President
November 18, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: It's a shame to be in on a day like this. If I didn't have you fellows today I would have probably gone out and taken a drive.

MR. GODWIN: Good driving.

THE PRESIDENT: It's all your fault.

Q We would rather be out riding too.

Q Let's go down to Warm Springs. You can ride down there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. It's out in the woods.

Q Still hope to get away?

THE PRESIDENT: Mmm -- at the end of the week, but I don't know. I have no idea.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Steve (Mr. Early) if he had anything for me, and he said he had nothing for me that I would be willing to talk about, so -- I think he's all right. (Mr. Early laughs)

Q Could you tell us, sir, what you might be planning in the case of the "captive" coal mines?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any news on that this afternoon.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us anything about that conversation at the Executive Mansion yesterday with the two Japanese envoys?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There isn't any news on that either.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your discussion this Noon with the Railroad?

THE PRESIDENT: There isn't any news on that either. Three strikes is out.

Q Mr. President, they are coming back tomorrow afternoon, are they not, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes, yes.

Q Mr. President, is that remark about three strikes with reference to the coal strike?

THE PRESIDENT: Third?

Q Yes, sir. This is the third coal strike in the last two months.

THE PRESIDENT: I hadn't counted them.

Q Mr. President, do you consider legislation necessary to handle the labor situation?

THE PRESIDENT: I said I didn't have any news on that today.

Q Mr. President, in your opinion is any strike legislation directly prohibiting strikes Unconstitutional within the terms ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There isn't any news on it at all, I am sorry.
(laughter)

Q Mr. President, here is a little one. Do you expect to sign the Defense Highway bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't read it. (laughter)

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: I will tell you, on the Defense Highway bill, it is a real -- a real problem, and that is this: We do need money for defense highways, but we are faced with what I think is very nearly an Unconstitutional procedure that the Government, the Congress and myself have been jointly guilty of for a great many years -- and former Congresses and former Presidents -- and that is Congresses which obligate themselves to pass appropriations in a future Session, thereupon directing the President -- Bureau of Roads to tell the Governors of the several States, after allocation of this -- of these prospective appropriations, to go ahead and make contracts.

I don't think that one Congress can bind a future Congress. The net result is that every year I am compelled by mandatory legislation to put into my budget large sums of money to be appropriated by Congress later on; by a moral obligation created by previous mandatory legislation.

And so, in the present case, I got yesterday an estimate for highway building for the fiscal year 1943. In other words, legislation to be passed some time next year before the first of July. And I don't want to do it, but there is this situation. The present Congress has gone ahead and told me that we had to do it, and the Highway Director had to tell the Governors of the States that this money was coming, and therefore he could make contracts for it. Well, I think it is a mistake for us to be paying out two very large sums simultaneously, in a state of national emergency like the present. First a very large sum running, I don't know -- what? -- a hundred and fifty million -- something like that -- or two hundred million dollars -- I have forgotten the exact figure -- to carry out promises made by a previous Congress, and at the same time to be asking for large sums of money for defense highways.

We do need the defense highways, unquestionably. We ought to have that money, but it is on top of all this money which -- which is handed out to several States by the allocation method for their ordinary State highway needs. So that is the situation that I am in. I have mentioned it, I think, almost every year in the past, and it still is there.

We have -- as I say, we do need the money for defense highways, but we ought not to be appropriating money for additional normal State highways that have precious little to do with national defense. So there are the "horns" of the dilemma that I am in.

Q Mr. President, there are reports in Washington that Government employees

are to be placed on a 44-hour week, by Executive Order. Is there anything to those reports, or anything ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Nothing has come to my desk.

Q Mr. President, is there anything further on the ODENWALD?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is there anything further on the ODENWALD?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. Nothing further. This is off the record. I will see if Steve (Mr. Early) can't prepare for you something that came in -- a report from a chief petty officer who was on the boarding party. It is such a joy that we ought to -- it ought to be made public. But I don't know whether the Secretary of the Navy or the Chief of Operations will give it to you or not. You might ask. It's really a joy.

Q Mr. President, has the decision of the Supreme Court been brought to your attention, which holds that State and local governments can impose sales taxes on national defense projects?

THE PRESIDENT: I got a report on it, and the Attorney General has said that that was substantially the Treasury Department's stand. And I referred it to the Secretary of the Treasury, to look into the details of the opinion from the legal point of view.

Q What is your own position on it?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you, because I haven't read the decision. I only had a short synopsis of it.

Q They estimate the cost one hundred million a year.

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q The implication is that it could be corrected by legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. And the Attorney General said that the implication in

the opinion itself was a matter that should be handled by legislation.

Q In the same general area of discussion, Mr. President, there is quite a lot of talk among Members in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, about a supposed secret treaty that was drafted by the United States and Great Britain, regarding the exemption of British and American private taxes for defense purposes in the two countries. Are you familiar with that?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think there is any secret treaty being negotiated. You would have to ask the State Department. I don't know. They have been working on, you might call it a temporary trade agreement.

Q Is that what it is?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q An agreement?

Q (interposing) On this Supreme Court ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

Q On the Supreme Court tax decision that had a direct bearing on those cost-plus contracts, now a fixed price contract, there are still a lot of them out. Do you have any provision for reimbursement, or the Federal Government paying those taxes? Have you considered possibly any revision of those contracts?

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to take your word for it. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, have you had an opportunity to consider a successor to Mr. Daniels (Josephus Daniels, recent Ambassador to Mexico)?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Not officially.

Q Mr. President, do you expect to see the Japanese again soon -- Mr. Nomura

and Mr. Kurusu?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose so.

Q No definite engagement yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, this is not a question about the "captive" coal strike, but aside from the matter of compulsion, has the Government taken any stand in opposition to the union shop?

THE PRESIDENT: No. None at all. I think you might -- on the coal strike -- if you want something to write about -- make this point perfectly clear, and that is that the Appalachian agreement with all the commercial mines stands just as it has ever since it went into operation; and that no question involved in the "captive" mine strike would affect the pay, or the hours, or the collective bargaining recognition of the United Mine Workers in any of the Appalachian agreement mines.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) You see?

Q That takes account of the point that Lewis made?

THE PRESIDENT: It would.

Q You mean point number A in his letter to you yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: Point number A, yes. The Appalachian agreement stands just the way it has been right along, with full recognition of the union, and full recognition of the conditions of work, hours and pay.

Q Then it would not be modified if it were a contract signed without the union shop?

THE PRESIDENT: It would not be modified in any way, shape, manner or form.

Q May we -- are we justified in drawing the conclusion from your statement that you don't think point A was valid?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think point A was valid, because I am quite sure that no mine in any of the Appalachian agreement mines would change in any way the conditions that were agreed to in the Appalachian agreement.

Q May we quote you directly on that?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I think so. I think so.

Q You said Yes?

Q Could we have him (the reporter) read that?

MR. ROMAGNA: Starting from "make this point perfectly clear"?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Take it slow. Those fellows don't know shorthand.

MR. ROMAGNA: (reading) "Make this point perfectly clear, and that is that the Appalachian agreement with all the commercial mines ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In all the commercial mines.

MR. ROMAGNA: (continuing) ".....in all the commercial mines stands just as it has ever since it went into operation; and that no question involved in the 'captive' mine strike would affect the pay, or the hours, or the collective bargaining recognition of the United Mine Workers in any of the Appalachian agreement mines."

Q Well, then, the particular thing -- you don't think the point A was valid?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. You can have that too.

Q May we quote you as saying it's a "red herring"?

THE PRESIDENT: All right. Paragraph -- therefore -- (laughter) -- I do not think that point A in Mr. Lewis' letter was a valid point.

MR. CORNELL: Thank you --?

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #785,
Executive Office of the President
November 21, 1941 -- 10.45 A.M.

Q The A.P. man got stopped outside.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The A.P. man got stopped outside.

THE PRESIDENT: He got stuck?

Q Stopped.

Q Suspicious this morning, eh?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Well, he's on Edgar Hoover's list. It's all right.

Q I didn't think it was out yet.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I didn't think it was well known.

THE PRESIDENT: No. It isn't well known yet.

Q They just didn't know him with the haircut.

THE PRESIDENT: They don't watch them. But in Warm Springs, Oh my.

Q What are the prospects?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What are the prospects for Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: Just hoping -- hoping. We have got the Marines down there.

Q Not planning to leave in a day or so?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q No departure this week?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I sent a letter, a few minutes ago, to Senator McKellar

(Kenneth McKellar of Tennessee) and Congressman Cartwright (Wilburn

Cartwright of Oklahoma) on the signing of Senate 1840, which was construction of highways needed for the national defense, calling attention to the fact that while a portion -- quite a large portion of the money is for roads that are urgently needed for the national defense, there is another -- there are other very large sums, which are for highway construction, which are not urgently needed for highway defense. In other words, a -- a place where we could have made an -- an emergency -- an emergency saving of a great many million dollars, but have not made it. And the only reason I signed the bill was to get the highways that are urgently needed for national defense.

Q Mr. President, is it possible that S.P.A.B. may by allocation orders postpone the building of the non-defense highways?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because part of it -- in fact nearly all of that under the bill is obligatory -- mandatory. It has to be allocated under the existing quota system.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, even if it can be allocated, they still can't get material. That is where S.P.A.B. would come in?

THE PRESIDENT: Pete, that is quite a suggestion. (laughter) I hadn't thought of it. I will think of it. (he laughs)

Q Mr. President, have you decided what, if anything ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Steve, (Mr. Early) will you make a note of that?

MR. EARLY: Made, sir. (laughter)

Q Have you decided what, if anything, you will do about labor legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Have you decided what, if anything, you will do about labor legislation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. There isn't any news on it this morning at all.

Q Mr. President, have you had any reports to indicate what part American equipment is taking in the offensive in Libya?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, is any consideration being given to breaking diplomatic relations with Vichy?

THE PRESIDENT: With who?

Q Vichy?

THE PRESIDENT: Haven't heard of it.

Q Mr. President, have you any reason to feel optimistic about the Japanese talks?

THE PRESIDENT: About what?

Q The Japanese talks?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh well, that's one of those "Are you beating your wife?" questions.

Q Is there anything you could tell us about them?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No, no.

Q Mr. President, any new developments in the coal strike?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Any new developments in the coal strike?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think there will be anything until tomorrow.

Q Mr. President, are you supporting extensions to the question of how to get power to Massena, that new aluminum plant?

THE PRESIDENT: I think that's -- frankly, I don't know. I don't know enough about it. I don't know what the suggestion is on that.

Q Do you have any preference, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I have got ---

Q (interposing) As to whether it should be built with public or private

funds?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, of course the whole -- the whole fight in New York for these many, many years -- from 1929 -- has been over the question of transmission lines, and the policy of the State was always that they should be controlled by the State itself, and not by private capital.

Q Mr. President, when you speak of possible developments tomorrow in the coal strike, do you mean on your initiative?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I expect to hear from Mr. Lewis. (Mr. John L. Lewis, C.I.O.) (adding) Or his policy committee.

Q Mr. President, any developments on the Price Control bill?

THE PRESIDENT: I won't hear until Monday on that. I don't know what happened.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: (laughing) Short but sweet.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #786,
Executive Office of the President,
November 25, 1941 -- 4.05 p.m.

Q Any Warm Springs?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Any Warm Springs prospects?

THE PRESIDENT: I think you may.

Q This week, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: It looks a little that way. I am not dead sure yet. You
can get your suitcase out.

Q Just get it out?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Just get it out?

THE PRESIDENT: Get it out and dust it off.

Q We have had it half-packed for ten days, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I ever gave the 'unpack' signal this time,
did I?

Q Not quite.

Q We have been offered conciliation for ten days.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q We have been offered conciliation for ten days.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got many things for you today.

The first thing I am going to speak about is the one I feel most
deeply about.

I am very sorry to get word from the State Department a little while
ago that the President of Chile has died. It brings up a disagreeable

fact that the United States has been forced to apologize to the government of Chile for an article written in Time magazine -- a disgusting lie which appeared in that paper. It was of course immediately cabled to Chile. It had arrived at the time that the president had left office in a very ill condition, and we are informed -- we are informed by our Ambassador that this article was a notable contribution to Nazi propaganda against the United States. It is being widely used by the Nazi, Fascist and Falangist press, playing it up big. The American Ambassador to Chile shares wholeheartedly in the general indignation and disgust, and goes on to say to the Secretary of State: (reading) "This is another illustration of how some American papers and writers, by such methods, are stocking the arsenals of propaganda of the Nazis to be used against us."

The President is now dead. The episode will not be easily forgotten in Chile, and I wish to take this opportunity as President to express the deep regret of the Administration, and the American people, to the people of Chile, and especially to the family of the late president.

Q (interposing) Can we have him (the reporter) read ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) If you want a copy of that quote verbatim, you can have it.

It is the first time that I have had to go to that length in the last eight and a half years; but it was due.

MR. EARLY: (to the President) I think you ought to tell them where the article appeared, and what page.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't like to spread the article around. If you want to use it, that's up to you, but Steve suggests that it is in the November 17th issue of Time.

Q Mr. President, have the Time editors made any statement about it?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Not that I know of.

Number two. The railroad matter has been referred back to the Emergency Board, and I have sent two things out. First is a reconvening of the Board. I haven't physically signed the letters yet -- they are not ready -- but the Board has been telephoned to -- to please get here on Thursday if they can, and Friday at the latest -- Friday morning. And I have sent the following letter -- Steve will have copies for you when you go out -- to the Railroads and the Brotherhoods -- their representatives -- Mr. Pelley and Mr. Harrison, and Mr. Al Johnston.

(reading): "As a result of many days of conference in relation to the railroad problem, I am, on my own motion, reconvening the Emergency Board.

"I am hereby requesting the parties to appear before this Board.

"I am asking the Board to commence its hearings on Friday, November 28, and I hope that you will be ready to appear before it at that time.

"I suggest that each party be allowed one day to state their case, as this will greatly expedite the proceedings, and because of the fact that the Board itself has previously received information from each side.

"I am asking that the report of the Board be handed down on Monday, December 1st."

Well, that's all there is at that end of it.

And I hope we will be able to go to Warm Springs on Friday afternoon, to stay a few days. And I have asked the president of the Foundation to see if he can postpone the dinner once more, and start the custom of a third Thanksgiving, on Saturday night. (laughter)

The only other thing I have got is -- Mr. Bullitt I am sending,

early next week, as my Special Representative in the Near East area.

Well, that's about all.

Q What will be his special assignment?

THE PRESIDENT: He will be Special Representative to the President, to get information, look around, find out what the needs are, and come back and tell me.

Q Where will he be placed, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: In a plane. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, returning to the railroad situation, are there some special facts which developed since the Board decision that you think may warrant an upward revision?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't put it that way. I would put it this way: That there have been some special facts which in my judgment have materialized since the report of the Board.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Period.

Q On Mr. Bullitt. Does the Near East take in what is usually recognized by the State Department?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say, roughly -- geographically -- this Libyan area, and the Nile area, and the Red Sea area. I don't know. Maybe the Persian Gulf area.

Q (interposing) The reason I asked ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Maybe Palestine.

Q That includes French North Africa? I wonder if that came in?

THE PRESIDENT: That's practically impossible. You can't get across from one to the other, unless you want to get shot down.

Q Do you include Turkey?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Turkey?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think so.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you talked about today with Governor Tugwell of Puerto Rico?

THE PRESIDENT: I just asked a lot of questions, that's all, and got a lot of answers. I am going to ask some more questions and get some more answers.

Q Did the question come up on importing Latin American foods to solve the price situation down there?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That was one of the things we never discussed.

Q Mr. President, have you had a report on the Machinists' strike out in St. Louis?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I heard last night, though, something that I didn't know about St. Louis. I think it might interest everybody. There was quite a serious strike going on in the Anheuser-Busch plant. (laughter) It was rather interesting that it affects such an essential part of the munitions supply, and secondly, the strike has been in progress for twenty-six years. Am I right? Twenty-six years. Rather interesting. That's why we are going to have labor legislation.

Q Mr. President, would you like to discuss the labor situation?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would you like to discuss the labor situation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I don't think so. We have talked about every phase of it last night. They have gone back to hold hearings.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President. (laughter)

FOR THE PRESS

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NOVEMBER 25, 1941

Statement by the President to the Press Conference
today:

The first thing I am going to speak about is
the one I feel most deeply about.

I am very sorry to get word from the State
Department that the President of Chile has died. That
brings up a disagreeable fact -- that the Government of
the United States has been forced to apologize to the
Government of Chile for an article written in Time magazine --
a disgusting lie which appeared in that magazine.

It was of course immediately cabled to Chile. It
arrived at the time that the President had left office in a
very ill condition, and we are informed by our Ambassador
that this article was a notable contribution to Nazi propaganda
against the United States.

It is being widely used by the Nazi, Fascist and
Falangist press. The United States Ambassador to Chile shares
wholeheartedly in the general indignation and disgust. He
reports to the Secretary of State that this is another illustra-
tion of how some American papers and writers by such methods
are stocking the arsenals of propaganda of the Nazis to be
used against us.

The President of Chile is now dead. I am deeply
sorry. [

The episode of the article will not be easily for-

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I am very sorry to get word from the State Department that the President of Chile has died. That brings up a disagreeable fact -- that the Government of the United States has been forced to apologize to the Government of Chile for an article written in Time magazine -- a disgusting lie which appeared in that magazine.

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It is being widely used by the Nazi, Fascist and Falangist press. The United States Ambassador to Chile shares wholeheartedly in the general indignation and disgust. He reports to the Secretary of State that this is another illustration of how some American papers and writers by such methods are stocking the arsenals of propaganda of the Nazis to be used against us.

The President of Chile is now dead. I am deeply sorry.

The episode of the article will not be easily forgotten in Chile.

I wish to take this opportunity, as President of the United States, to express the deep regret of the Administration and the American people to the people of Chile; especially to the family of the late President.

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CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #787,
Executive Office of the President,
November 28, 1941 -- 10.55 A.M.

MR. GODWIN: Who is that guy? (looking in the direction of Mr. Eugene Casey)

THE PRESIDENT: Why, hello little stranger.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you for the "little". (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Are you packed?

Q All ready.

Q Mr. President, it looks like you are going into competition with the
apple people.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. An apple a day.

Q When do you think we will be back?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q When do you think we will be back?

(answer not heard)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: Why -- still hope to get off this afternoon at three o'clock.

I was asked in the front row when I would come back. I can't answer
the question because I don't know. I hope to stay until Tuesday, but
I am not sure that I can.

If somebody will ask me what the reason is, the reason is the Japanese
situation.

I have here a release, which you will get when you go out, in re-
gard to merchant vessels. This is after consultation between State,
War, Navy and Maritime Commission.

(reading): "American merchant vessels sailing on routes between
the United States ports and ports of Spain, Portugal, and their adjacent

island possessions will not be armed at this time.

"American merchant vessels sailing in the inter-American trade between ports of the United States and ports of Central and South America will not be armed, at this stage.

"American merchant vessels sailing on routes in the Pacific ocean will not be armed under existing circumstances.

"Public announcement will be made of any change in policy affecting any of these routes."

And that is all.

Q Mr. President, could you say how long you think the "existing circumstances" may prevail?

THE PRESIDENT: I think I would ask that question in Tokio and not in Washington.

Q Is there anything you can tell us sir, about these Japanese situations -- I mean negotiations?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it's better not.

MR. GODWIN: If you have read newspapers carefully, I think you would come to the conclusion that we have been getting news based on Tokio, to a large extent, in that respect. I just simply throw that out.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that probably is true, Earl, and it has been based on an American policy of infinite patience.

Q Well, Mr. President, could you say, sir, whether these negotiations have broken down temporarily?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They have not.

Q Mr. President, did the Japanese yesterday bring any response to the memorandum -- the document presented by Mr. Hull?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Mr. President, can you tell when the next meeting will be held with the Japanese?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Can you tell us, sir, if there were any new developments in your talks with the Japanese different from those that they have had from Mr. Hull?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I would say just exactly the same.

I think I could tell you, for background -- but only for background -- that the situation seems serious, because our one desire has been peace in the Pacific, and the taking of no steps to alter the prospects of peace, which of course has meant non-aggression. Really boils down to that.

And also -- as background -- I was, last spring, talking along the line of general peace for the Pacific, based on a settlement of the war between China and Japan -- the restoration of peace there, plus a permanent arrangement for non-aggression in the Pacific, and the restoration of normal economic relations, access to raw materials.

And as you know, the Secretary of State, with even more patience than I have -- which is saying a whole lot -- had been holding conversations from, I think it was April. And in the middle of them came the Japanese expedition to Indo-China, which is very far afield, and caused us very great concern, because it seemed to be a reasonable -- to show a reasonable parallel with the Hitler methods in Europe. As for example, the infiltration, over a period of several months, of the German armies into Roumania and Hungary, placing themselves in the position where strategically they were all set to attack Yugoslavia and Greece.

And of course the -- the drawing of the parallel made peacefully-inclined people over here to wonder whether this occupation, with a

limited number of troops in Indo-China, was the beginning of a similar action in the Far East, placing obvious American interests in great jeopardy if the drawing of such a parallel was justified.

The American flag, of course, does fly from the Philippines. And even before the Japanese went into Indo-China, one might almost say that the Philippines were located in a horseshoe, with Japanese military control over the coasts of China, all the way down to the southern border of China, and Japanese military control on the opposite side -- the east -- over the mandated islands, so called.

You look at a map closely, that is a sort of a horseshoe, open at the southern end, and the Philippines in the middle of it. I think a study of the map would be advisable for all of us, because the Hitler method has always been aimed at a little move here and a little move there, by which complete encirclement, or the obtaining of essential military points, was merely -- that was a prelude to the extension of aggression to other places. It's a perfectly obvious historical fact today. And we are of course thinking not only about the American flag in the Philippines, not only about certain vital defense needs which come from that open end of the horseshoe, but we are thinking about the -- something even more important, and that is the possible extension of control by aggression into the whole of the Pacific area. And we are thinking about what it would mean to this country if that policy were to be used against us in the whole Pacific area. I don't think that anything more can be said at this time. We are -- we are waiting.

MR. EARLY: Mr. President, it has been a long time since you defined "background". For the benefit of the newcomers, will you do it again?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, Steve suggests I define "background". "Background", as I

remember it, is that it is not to be attributed to me in any way, or to the White House in any way. But it is just so it will help you to write your stories.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And I don't think I would attribute it to "high sources in the Administration", but you call it "best information obtainable in Washington" or something like that. (laughter)

Q (aside) I don't know any better.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) It's the Government. In other words, it's the Government of the United States. It isn't -- it isn't the President, and it isn't the Administration. It's your Government. That's the point of it.

Q On that basis, Mr. President, is -- is it, since you are not to be quoted, is there real danger of extension of this into the adjoining country -- Indo-China -- now?

THE PRESIDENT: I think, with that background, you had better write your own stories.

MR. P. BRANDT: Mr. President, would this mean that we are working for the status quo?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Have been ever since -- for a long time.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Wait a minute. I wouldn't say working for the status quo, Pete, because we ---

MR. P. BRANDT: (interposing) Temporary status quo?

THE PRESIDENT: You have got to leave China out of the status quo. We are certainly not working for the status quo in China.

Q (interjecting) That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Or Indo-China, for that matter.

Q Against further aggression?

THE PRESIDENT: Against further aggression. We are working to remove the present aggression.

Q Are you back on the record, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That is still background.

MR. GODWIN: That Chinese situation is absolutely solid and set, is it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Absolutely.

MR. GODWIN: No chance of compromise?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

MR. GODWIN: And that is still of the record, I suppose?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. That is off the record altogether.

MR. GODWIN: Not off the record -- background.

THE PRESIDENT: Background. Yes.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, if you are through with that phase of the Conference, there was another thing that I wanted to take up. Early in your Administration, you did a very effective job commenting on National Committeemen practicing law in Washington. I wonder whether, in the light of present developments, you have anything to say about former public officials representing defense contractors here now?

THE PRESIDENT: Jim, go and ask the Attorney General. There is some kind of a -- I don't know whether it is -- whether it has been introduced or not, but the Attorney General and I were heartily in favor of some kind of legislation that would meet that exact question of yours. Now what the status is, I don't know, whether it was introduced or it is being prepared.

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interposing) Well, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) There are several Members of the Congress that are also very much interested.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Well, there are several approaches to that. One of them is for Congressional investigation of these activities. The second is to bar any public official from such activities for two years after he leaves.

THE PRESIDENT: You know that used to be the rule.

Q No. Only in the Treasury, I think, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: No. In others too -- in the Navy Department -- and I was there -- almost before we were born -- years ago. You couldn't practice law either for -- against the Government, or lobby, or anything like it for two years, and that was the general rule. Now, when it was repealed, I don't know. That is very historical.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Do you think it would be a good thing to have something like that?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Senator Hatch, I believe, has a bill of that sort, in the last few days.

THE PRESIDENT: That is why I say you had better ask Francis Biddle, because I don't know what the ---

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- details of it are.

MR. J. WRIGHT: We did ask him at the last press conference he had, about his attitude on it, but he seemed to be passing -- he did not say any more than that it was up to Congress.

THE PRESIDENT: I think it has gone beyond that. I think -- we are heartily

in favor of it. You can put that down. A good idea.

Q Mr. President, the Island of Puerto Rico ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) By the way, this is off the record entirely.

Don't you think that should apply to the press too?

MR. J. WRIGHT: Lobbying?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (laughter)

MR. J. WRIGHT: Yes. By all means.

THE PRESIDENT: Resigning from the active newspaper field, going into the

lobbying field -- why shouldn't that apply to the press in Washington?

Q Would that apply to Government jobs?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Would that apply to retaining Government jobs too?

THE PRESIDENT: No. But it would apply if you did take a Government job.

(laughter) Then you would get stuck.

Q Mr. President, the Island of Puerto Rico is very much excited over a Caribbean plan, which they have understood would involve their economy and tie it to that of other islands in the Caribbean. I understand that Governor Tugwell had that under consideration in talking to you about it.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's -- the way you state it there's nothing in it at all. In other words, there is going to be a study of various forms, in which Puerto Ricans will take part, on the economics of the whole area, and all the islands there may be from the adjacent mainland. And I personally think it's sort of silly to worry about a study which hasn't yet begun, especially in view of the fact that Puerto Rico will be in on the study.

Q Mr. President, in that connection, is there anything planned ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No plan. There is no plan about that.

Q In that connection, is there any plan of appointing a joint Anglo-American board for ---

THE PRESIDENT: That might be one of several steps. In other words, the whole situation.

Q Mr. President, have you any assurances from the independent steel companies that they will abide by arbitration in this ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Only what I have read in the papers. I haven't heard anything for the last three or four days.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #788,
Executive Office of the President,
December 2, 1941 -- 4.00 P.M.

THE PRESIDENT: I thought I would get you all crossed up this morning, and have you in here on time.

Q We were quite surprised.

THE PRESIDENT: Was afraid somebody would drop 'daid'.

MR. GODWIN: Good morning, Boss.

Q This will teach you to be on time once.

MR. GODWIN: We're here.

THE PRESIDENT: Good. Good.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have here a seven-page letter from the Emergency Railway Board, in regard to the settlement of the Railway demands. And Steve (Mr. Early) has had it mimeographed, and you will get it outside. I don't think you want me to read it all now. I will just read the first two paragraphs.

(Reading): "Your Emergency Board is honored and pleased to report to you that its proposals for a mediation settlement of the threatened railway strike have been accepted or acquiesced in by the representatives and spokesmen for the contending parties.

"It will be necessary for the representatives of some of the labor organizations to submit the proposed settlement to meetings of their general chairmen for final approval. These meetings will be held in Chicago on December 4. However, your Emergency Board has been assured that the representatives of these organizations who participated in the mediation negotiations will recommend the approval of the proposals contained in the mediation agreement. We are confident that the specific proposals for settlement of the railway dispute which we submitted to the parties will be formally approved without change by all of the parties. The railroad officials have already accepted the mediation proposals."

The rest of the letter relates to the provisions of the mediation

settlement, and it will be awaiting you outside. So I trust that that is the end of that trouble that we have been having for a couple of weeks.

Q Mr. President, the State Department ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) And then -- Oh, yes -- also tomorrow they are going to give me the formal report and a transcript of the proceedings, and then I will thank them very much on behalf of the Government.

Q Mr. President, if the Japanese march in on Thailand, can you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q If the Japanese should march into Thailand, could you tell what the United States Government will do?

THE PRESIDENT: What was the first word in that sentence? (laughter) That is why I asked you to repeat the question. Everybody can get it.

Q 'Providing'. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Anything else?

Q Mr. President, a State Department spokesman said today that you have asked Japan for an early reply to Secretary Hull's proposals. Did that take the form of an ultimatum, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: What proposals? And who was the State Department authority?

Q I can't tell you that.

THE PRESIDENT: Well then, I can't answer the question.

Q Mr. President, we were told at the State Department that you had asked Mr. Welles to make certain inquiries of Japanese representatives ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) That is correct.

Q (continuing) --- or the Japanese government, through their representatives, this morning.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

Q (continuing) Is there any indication of the nature of those inquiries?

THE PRESIDENT: Let me put it this way, that ---

MR. CHARLES HAMILTON: (interposing) Mr. President ---

VOICES: Sh -- Sh.

THE PRESIDENT: Ask Charlie ---

MR. CHARLES HAMILTON: (interposing) Never since Mr. Theodore Roosevelt have we needed a big stick as much as we do today, so I am giving this to you. (hands a big ash cane to the President)

THE PRESIDENT: I think, By Jove ---

MR. CHARLES HAMILTON: (interposing) I got it in Wales.

THE PRESIDENT: Charlie, thanks ever so much. That's one thing I have longed for. (laughter) Only, Charlie, for your own safety, don't stand in the front row. That's all right. That's a good hefty one. (holding it up to the reporters) You know, it has got an awfully nice balance. It has got an awfully nice balance.

MR. GODWIN: (interposing) Well, somebody was asking you a question. (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT. No!

MR. GODWIN: Yes! I think we might have got something out of that.

THE PRESIDENT: I do too. I think it's all right.

Q Mr. President, you started out to say, "Let's put it this way." (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: What was it we were talking about? Was it the -- something before Congress was it?

MR. GODWIN: No.

Q The nature of the inquiries made of Japan.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, let's put it this way. And this answers a good many questions at the same time. Try to make this as short as I can.

As you know, since last April, we have been discussing with the

Japanese government some method to arrive at an objective. The objective was permanent peace in the whole area of the Pacific. It seemed at times as if progress was being made toward that objective. And during that whole period, up to I think it was the end of June, we assumed that as both nations were negotiating toward that objective, that there would be no act which would be contrary to the desired end of peace.

We were therefore somewhat surprised, the end of June, when the Japanese government sent troops -- I think to a specified over-all total, in other words, a number which would not be exceeded -- into Indo-China, after very brief negotiations with the French Vichy government; the conclusion of which arrangement the Vichy government let it be understood rather clearly that they had agreed to this number of troops, principally because they were powerless to do anything else.

Sometime thereafter, after the troops had gone there, the conversations were resumed between Japan and the United States, and for a while they seemed to be making progress. But again we made it perfectly clear that the objective which we were seeking meant the taking of no additional territory by anybody in the Pacific area.

And the other day we got word from various sources that already, in Indo-China, there were large additional bodies of Japanese forces -- various kinds of forces -- naval, air, and land -- and that other forces were on the way; and that even before these other forces had arrived, the number of forces already there had greatly exceeded, in Indo-China, the original amount which the French government had agreed to, and that the forces that were on the way would still more greatly exceed the original number.

And the question was asked this morning of the Japanese government,

at my request, very politely, as to what the purpose of this was -- what the intention of the Japanese government in doing this was, as to the future; and eliminating, of course, the possibility that it was for the policing of Indo-China, which was an exceedingly peaceful spot beforehand.

And we hope to get a reply to that very simple question shortly.

Q Was there any time limit put on it?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. That's a silly question. One doesn't put a time limit on things any more. That's the last century. We are at peace with Japan. We are asking a perfectly polite question. I think that's all.

MR. J. HENRY: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q I remember Theodore Roosevelt put it ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, yes. But that's the last generation. That is almost worthy of a first headline. (he laughs)

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #789,
Executive Office of the President,
December 5, 1941 -- 11.00 A.M.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got here -- they are ready for you when you go out -- the supplementary report of the Emergency Board on the railway situation. And it's a printed report. You have had the letter of transmittal already. That tells the whole story.

Q Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Yes?

Q (continuing) Will you take any further action in regard to the Report's recommendations about the Railway Express Agency?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q Do you know what is going to be done about that? They refuse to compromise.

THE PRESIDENT: Who?

Q The Railway Express Agency ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Oh.

Q (continuing) --- refused ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think that is being taken up between the owners of the company and the men, directly.

You know, the Railway Express Agency was formed in the old days by the old express companies, the Adams, the American, and the National, et cetera, soon after the -- the parcel post ran by the Government went into effect, and of course decreased business in the old companies very greatly. And the railroad companies, as I understand it, bought the stock, or the control of the stock, in the old private express com-

panies, and it is now owned by the railroads.

Q Would it be your thought, sir, then, since the railroads themselves have accepted the report, that they would do likewise with their subsidiary?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't got any thought. They are talking among themselves at the present time.

Q Mr. President, have you any plan before you for some sort of agreement or understanding between the C.I.O. and A.F.L., looking toward ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q (continuing) --- settlement ---?

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make at this time on the defense strike bill just passed by the House?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, could you tell us if Mr. Murray (Philip Murray, President of the C.I.O.) has reconsidered his resignation from the Mediation Board?

THE PRESIDENT: I think the thing is -- the subject is -- what do they call it? -- in suspense at the present time.

Q Mr. President, have you any comment to make on the story the Chicago Tribune had yesterday morning, regarding alleged war plans?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news on that. I think the Secretary of War is saying something about it today.

Q Mr. President, the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, which is building a supposedly defense housing project in Alexandria, and in an "A" residential zone, and busting it up, claims openly before the City Council that they are building this on the request of the highest authority in Washington. You are the highest authority I know. Is it you? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It must be a higher authority. I don't know.

Q Have you any word as to the Japanese reply yet, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: They are going to see the Secretary of State at 11.15 this morning -- which made me late this morning, I was talking to the Secretary. He is coming around here to lunch with me about one o'clock. And until he comes around for lunch, I won't know anything about it.

Q Mr. President, I think it was last week you had a conference here with Governor Edison of New Jersey. Did that concern the political situation up there in any way, or Mayor Hague?

THE PRESIDENT: It did not.

Q Mr. President, when are you going to name a successor to General Fleming?
(Philip B. Fleming, Wage and Hour Administrator)

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't taken it up at all.

MR. GODWIN: Well, Mr. President, have you any idea that the -- there will be any announcement, or explanation, about this Japanese conversation today?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Can you tell me ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I haven't got the faintest idea. In fact, I won't hear about it, as I said, until about one o'clock.

Q Mr. President, about ten days ago you approved a project in Wisconsin for a powder plant -- a \$65,000,000 plant -- to be located at Merrimack.

THE PRESIDENT: Has the location been set?

Q Well, that's the question now. (laughter) They closed the real estate office.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I approved any project. I think I made a definite recommendation. I think I approved merely the building of the

powder plant, and that is as far as I have gone.

Q Do you know anything about why they have stopped the acquisition of land in Merrimack?

THE PRESIDENT: I didn't know they had.

Q They closed up the Government real estate office.

THE PRESIDENT: I have no idea.

Q Mr. President, the House Appropriations Committee did not put in its bill the request for the Douglas Dam ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I hope very much it will be put in, in the Senate, because all of the defense agencies are agreed that the power from that proposed Dam is a very essential thing to national defense. So I am hoping it will be put in in the Senate.

Q Mr. President, is Ambassador Steinhardt going to return to Russia?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. He is still reporting about Russia.

Q How long will the report continue, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: That -- it will continue until it is ended. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, yesterday we were given some details about an encounter between a Navy ship and an Axis submarine. Does that mean a change of policy, and are we going to hear about such things from now on?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I hadn't had any report from the Navy Department, except what appeared -- that the SALINAS fired some guns at the submarine, either before or -- I don't know whether it was before or after she was actually torpedoed. I couldn't tell you about anything else but what the Navy gave out.

MR. GODWIN: The Navy gave out about that. They said it was counter-attacked, but previously -- that -- I think that the Navy has been silent regarding any encounters, if any.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I suppose the easiest way of putting it is this, that it's so difficult to -- for the Navy to give out a story, without a false impression being given to the public. During the World War we had, of course, a lot of destroyers all over the place; we had a lot of cruisers all over the place; we had a lot of armed merchant ships all over the place. And, on the other side, we had a lot of sub-chasers. And we had some submarines of our own.

At the end of the war, I did a little figuring, and I figured out that if we listed as sunk everything that had been fired at by a lot of very enthusiastic people on those ships, in perfectly -- in honest -- their own honest belief, we would have sunk about 725 German submarines.

Actually, as I remember it -- and of course we got this at the end of the war, from German figures on submarines that were in certain -- pretty well known localities, and were obviously the ones that were fired at -- I think we sank 16 -- actually.

So it's a pretty silly thing for anybody to say that a submarine was sunk, unless you actually saw it sink, or else blown up; or unless it came up to the surface and surrendered. That happened once or twice in the World War. It's a little bit difficult for all you people to write stories about having sunk this submarine or that submarine. In the old days, of course, it was thought that if a lot of oil came to the surface it meant that the submarine was sunk. Of course that just isn't true, as proven in the World War.

Q Mr. President, you have been seeing numerous labor people lately and you have an appointment today with Van Bittner of the C.I.O. Is there any connection between these engagements?

THE PRESIDENT: No. No. None at all.

Q Could you tell us the purpose of your meeting with Mr. Bittner?

THE PRESIDENT: Just that I haven't seen him for a long time, that's all.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I don't think that there is any story in that.

Q Is it inflation that makes your new books cost twice as much as the first set?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It's because -- it's because the first publishers were a little over-optimistic. (laughter)

Q Thirty bucks is too much.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: (to the President) Did you know that Wells Hawks (old-time circus press agent) had died?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Did you know that Wells Hawks died this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Did he really? Too bad, poor old Wells.

MR. GODWIN: He was very sick.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. He had been for a long time.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #790,
Executive Office of the President
December 9, 1941 -- 4.10 P.M.

(This is the first War Press Conference)

MR. EARLY: Tremendous conference.

THE PRESIDENT: They will get damn little.

MR. EARLY: Tremendous numbers. It's all right.

Q How are you, Mr. President?

Q How are you, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, fine. There's darn little news, except that I haven't finished my speech.

Q It's going to be pretty late?

THE PRESIDENT: Pretty nearly finished though. That's old stuff (indicating typed sheets before him). That's the third draft. I am now completing the fifth copy.

MISS MAY CRAIG: You've got a new system out there.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MISS MAY CRAIG: A new system out there. It's going to take a long time to get in.

THE PRESIDENT: What's that? What do you have to do? Have they frisked you?
(laughter)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Practically.

THE PRESIDENT: Now May, I don't think that's nice.

MISS MAY CRAIG: They did Fred Hale once.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to hire a female Secret Service agent around here to do the frisking.

MISS MAY CRAIG: Remember the time they frisked Fred Hale at a reception?

THE PRESIDENT: At what?

MISS MAY CRAIG: Remember the time they frisked Senator Hale at a reception?

THE PRESIDENT: Terribly funny.

MISS MAY CRAIG: He never got over it.

THE PRESIDENT: He never got over it.

MISS MAY CRAIG: The sacred Hale person.

THE PRESIDENT: He was here before you and I were born.

(pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have anything on operations. I think -- I don't know whether you have had this before. There was an attack this morning on Clark Field in the Philippines, resulting in some officer and soldier casualties; and General MacArthur is trying to get further information. That was early this morning.

Q Have you talked with General MacArthur, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Not personally on the telephone. He has been telephoning two or three times to the Chief of Staff.

Hmm -- one or two bills -- I don't know who the authorities are ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, a little louder, please.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I am sending to Senator McKellar (Kenneth McKellar, Democrat, of Tennessee) a note, saying that I understand that a bill has been introduced in the House authorizing and directing the President to consolidate N.Y.A. and C.C.C. in a single agency, to be known as the Civilian Youth Administration. While I have not had an opportunity to examine the bill in detail, I heartily approve the objective, and I understand that the Budget has gone into it also, and has approved it. That's about all I have got.

MR. GODWIN: What was that final name? Civilian Youth what?

THE PRESIDENT: Civilian Youth Administration. C.Y.A. instead of N.Y.A.

MR. GODWIN: Yes.

Q Mr. President, are you considering any revamping of the defense transportation setup?

THE PRESIDENT: The what?

Q Any revamping of the defense transportation setup?

THE PRESIDENT: Why a question like that? It's working awfully well.

Q I beg your pardon?

THE PRESIDENT: Why a question like that? What is the objective?

Q A report has been booted around that a Federal Coordinator of Transportation is being considered ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No, no.

Q (continuing) --- with wide authority over all transportation agencies.

THE PRESIDENT: No. It hasn't been considered.

Q Thank you.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us of your discussions with S.P.A.B. this morning?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. I think I can. It was a conference -- of course O.P.M. was there also, and several other agencies. I should say that there were two -- that there were, you might say, two concurrent policies that were agreed on. The first was to -- on the present program, which is now getting into full production -- to go ahead with a speed-up of it. Well, that involves, of course, probably working seven days a week, and pushing the speed of the existing program to such an extent that we will get a great many more actual deliveries in the -- what? -- calendar year nineteen-thirty -- nineteen-forty-two, than the present program

calls for.

Then the other policy that comes with it is to enter into a still greater expansion of plants, which means new plants and additions to old plants, thereby increasing the total volume of production as fast as that can be attained. In other words, a -- a speeding up, and an increase of totals, working toward an all-out effort. Of course, a great many other things which will form a component part of that phrase -- an "all-out effort".

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) We also talked about the -- certain things called priorities, and as you will see from what I say tonight, there is not at this time any shortage in food -- foodstuffs. In other words, there is enough for all of us, and enough left over to help the food situation among those who are fighting against the same evil that we are fighting against.

On a very large number of articles in normal civilian use, there is also no shortage at the present time for civilian use, or for defense purposes. Oh what? -- lipstick. (laughter)

(aside): Thank you, May. (May Craig)

There is, however, for this new program, a very great shortage in most metals, and it seems clear that in putting the program into effect we shall have to do two things. The first is to increase the original output of the raw material or metals, and the second is to divert from civilian use to defense needs at least fifty percent -- at least half -- of all metals which during this past year have been going to civilian and not defense purposes. It means that people will have to do without a great many metal things, which they have been

able to get up to this time.

Q Mr. President, this speed-up thing in production will about eliminate any unemployment in the automobile industry, will it not?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I don't think you can put it that way, because after all, if I said it would end it, then you would come back at me a month or two from now and say, "How about these people that have been thrown out of work temporarily while they were retooling the factory?" You see?

Q I was thinking ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Not permanent.

Q Governor Van Wagner told you sometime ago.

THE PRESIDENT: No. There won't be any thrown permanently out of work.

Q (interposing) Well, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It's just like the usual slump in the automobile business, you know. About every summer they stop working for a month to get the tools for the new models out. Well, there may be something like that occurring in various plants, not only automobile but lots of other things, where they are retooling for defense purposes.

Q Mr. President, you mentioned the figure of fifty percent a few minutes ago in the automobile industry, and some of the ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. I didn't say there.

Q No. I know you didn't ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Metal uses.

Q Yes, sir. In the automobile industry and some others, there is a cut already of fifty percent or more. Can you give us any idea ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I have no idea where that would fit into the total of the fifty percent, but it would be in it.

Q Mr. President, you have had a number of discussions with labor leaders

in the last couple of weeks. A number of them have suggested the calling of a conference of labor and industry, to see if they couldn't sit down together and work out some kind of a voluntary program, in the place of anti-strike legislation. Are you giving any consideration to calling such a conference?

THE PRESIDENT: I am. And that is all I can say. Whether it would be an unofficial off-the-record, or an official conference, I haven't got the slightest idea. I am giving it consideration. Don't -- don't write it up as meaning this that or the other thing, because frankly I don't know.

Q Mr. President, are you informed whether O.P.M. requisitioning procedure contemplates employing the Justice Department and the Courts -- the new procedure approved by S.P.A.B. to requisition critical materials?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. That is over my head.

Q Mr. President, are there any further details you can tell us about the attack on Hawaii?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. Not yet.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, there have been a lot of questions put up to Congress, and if you like you can put this one off the record, but could you make any comment about domestic responsibilities for that surprise?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly not. I don't know anything. Neither does anybody in Congress.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) Oh.

Mr. President, this is not an impudent question, sir, but it might clear up things. Do you intend to give the public the benefit of all of the reports you get?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say this -- and this is not off the record, because I am going to say it tonight -- I can't remember the exact phraseology, but I am going to give -- all of us are going to give everything to the public, on two conditions. They have to conform -- all information has to conform with two obvious conditions before it can be given out.

The first is that it is accurate. Well, I should think that would seem fairly obvious.

And the second is that in giving it out it does not give aid and comfort to the enemy. And I should think that those two conditions ought to be put up in every office in Washington.

Q Where?

THE PRESIDENT: In Washington. That includes newspaper offices as well as department offices.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Excuse me ---

MR. P. BRANDT: There is no use to have that put up in department offices, because it is impossible to get any information from any department now, on the material that is a matter of record.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, but are you sure that it conforms to both conditions?

MR. P. BRANDT: To both of them, yes.

THE PRESIDENT: Who told you that?

MR. P. BRANDT: What? They give you the run around.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, then, you can't assume that the information has conformed to the two conditions.

MR. P. BRANDT: You ought to have someone there who can say whether it does conform, and we are not ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Oh, that has got to be determined by the higher officers -- the Army and Navy.

MR. P. BRANDT: But we have been told that these officers have no information -- have instructions not to talk on any subject.

THE PRESIDENT: I think that is probably correct.

MR. P. BRANDT: Where does that put us? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: It means that you have got to wait -- sit and wait on this information, because you can't determine ---

MR. P. BRANDT: (interposing) No. I am not talking about ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- until certain information conforms to those two principles of it. We can't leave that determination in the hands of a third assistant -- what? -- Captain or Major in the Army, or a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, who is a third or fourth assistant to the officer. It has got to come from the top.

MR. P. BRANDT: I am talking about what is already a matter of record. It is a question of saving us time. We spent four hours getting some information which was a matter of record.

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, but lots of these things may be matters of record. It does not mean that they conform.

MR. P. BRANDT: Can we print that then?

THE PRESIDENT: Certainly not. You are going to get it as soon as the information conforms to those two principles. Just as soon. Now that is perfectly easy. That is a very simple rule to go by. Those two things have got to be accurate. In other words, it has got to have been proved. It can't be a flash of what somebody thinks in the matter. I want it to be an accurate record. Now that is the first thing.

Now the mere fact that one bureau in one Department gets a flash,

for example -- I should think as a matter of fact -- mind you, this is war -- this ought to be checked before that one bureau gets it out. It should be checked by somebody in authority.

And then the second thing is that it will not be information that will help the enemy. Now you fellows can't determine that. The papers are not running the war. The Army and Navy have got to determine that.

MR. P. BRANDT: This morning we wanted to find out how much had been appropriated for Guam, and whether any work had been done on Guam. And there was no information available. And of course ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, the matter -- matter of the amount of the appropriation is a matter of public record. There is no reason why you shouldn't have that.

MR. P. BRANDT: That is what I am talking about.

THE PRESIDENT: Right. Now, first of all, you find out what was appropriated. You don't have to go to any Department, you have got it in your own office. Now the other point, as to whether we should tell you what had been done, most certainly I don't think that that ought to be printed.

MR. P. BRANDT: You could say whether it had been started, because the appropriation is from April.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, all right. Now, what was the appropriation for?

MR. P. BRANDT: For improving the harbor.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. P. BRANDT: For improving the harbor, etcetera. That was the Congressional authorization.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, you have got a very simple question there. I haven't got the faintest idea whether it was actually started or not. It doesn't make any difference, the way things have turned out. Between April and

now, you would have to get a company with a dredge. That's the first thing, to go out and do it. Then after that he has got to get his equipment together. After that he has got to find shipping. So now it might have been determined -- perfectly conceivable -- I am not saying that this was done. I am more ignorant than you are on this, because you boned up on it.

MR. P. BRANDT: No I haven't.

THE PRESIDENT: Well then, we are both doing it now. It is perfectly possible that if there was not enough shipping available to send that dredging material out there -- the dredge, the machinery, etcetera -- that under priorities it was thought that something else was more important. I think it is an awfully small matter, Pete, because really, dredging out the Harbor of Guam was not going to save that Island.

MR. P. BRANDT: We spent four hours on two paragraphs. All I want to know is if somebody in the Army can tell me whether they can or cannot give it out, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There may be reasons.

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) --- rather than give us the run-around.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, the trouble is that they are much maligned men. If you would come here and ask me what the press doesn't know about that, for ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President/ ---

MR. P. BRANDT: (continuing) I think if that -- it apparently is a blanket order not to give out any information. If that will conform, you can ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There might be all kinds of questions. Suppose, for the sake of argument that we had something out there -- I don't know.

MR. P. BRANDT: We have had cases like that -- by digging it out -- but the officers ought to know. And there is no reason why it can't be given out.

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, Pete, you have got to remember the psychological condition of these officers.

Q What about our psychological condition? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: Your toes haven't been stepped on, and theirs have.

MISS MAY CRAIG: (aside) Yes they have too.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) They are in the position of having their toes -- by everybody looking askance at them, and saying, "Huh! Were you the leak?"

Q Well, Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Well, Mr. President, in that connection -- in connection with this question Mr. Kluckhohn asked a few minutes ago. There have been a lot of reports which I think you might help us clear up, if possible, to the effect that one reason why the Japs were able to get over Pearl Harbor was that there were a lot of leaves granted -- someone slept -- let everybody go to Honolulu for the week-end. That is the report. I think that if it could be cleared up, I think it would help.

THE PRESIDENT: How do I know? How do you know? How does the person reporting it know?

Q I am sure I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: And neither does the person starting the report.

Q What's that?

THE PRESIDENT: And neither does the person starting the report have any information. You have to remember that.

Q They -- they might have some information, mightn't they, for ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No. Absolutely impossible.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, may I ask you, sir, if your answer about my question on Congress -- you said "Certainly not. I don't know anything. Neither does anyone else in Congress."? Is that on the record?

THE PRESIDENT: On the record, yes.

Q Mr. President, returning to your two conditions, I wonder if you could, for our guidance, define that second condition -- "giving aid and comfort to the enemy."? The thing that troubles me -- does that mean that no bad news is going to be given out?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no. It depends on whether the giving out is of aid and comfort to the enemy.

Q Mr. President, who will determine that as the over-all judgment? Will you determine it?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Army and Navy.

Q Are they going to operate individually on this?

THE PRESIDENT: No. They work together very closely.

Q But the Secretary of War and the Secretary of the Navy will each determine what should come from his Department?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes -- or jointly.

MR. J. WRIGHT: But there isn't to be one give-out of news then, under this setup?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, there isn't, Jim, in London, for instance. They have consultations first, and they give out in London war communiques to the public. It is divided, as I remember it, into three different kinds of communiques. One is Army, one is Air, and one is Navy. And I think in London the way they have worked it out, to apparently the

satisfaction of everybody -- the press too -- those are, each one of them, broken down into general fields.

For instance, on the Navy end, it's -- there is a field called the Mediterranean field; another one called the Atlantic, and I suppose now there will be another -- the Far East. And in the air end, there is a -- three fields there are at the present time. There is the Libyan field, the Mediterranean, and the attack on the -- daily attack on Germany field; and the domestic field. It seems to work out all right. Then of course, before they are all given out, the three fighting arms over there -- we have only two -- talk it over between them, and see that they don't clash in what they give out.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, most of the newspaper offices here have had a lot of complaints on the way that system has worked. Have you heard of those?

THE PRESIDENT: No. I have heard some things, where the shoe is on the other foot. (laughter)

MR. D. CORNELL: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I think you know what I mean.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Yes, I do. Some of it started ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Some of it at the start was a little stupid ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) What?

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Some of it at the start over there was a little stupid.

They straightened out in a few weeks.

THE PRESIDENT: Remember we have only had forty-eight hours of it.

MR. KLUCKHOHN: Not here. I mean over there.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

(most of the newspaper men had left the room at this point)

MR. J. MINIFIE: Will there eventually be a censor that we can get our teeth into?

THE PRESIDENT: It is awfully hard to answer it. Talk to Steve about this.

MR. J. MINIFIE: I was saying that I thought that in the Army and Navy they were getting on awfully well considering.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether -- well, you have been in London. I don't know -- do you think their system was pretty good?

MR. J. MINIFIE: Very good. And then particularly -- the best thing about it is they never cross up, and you can't get ahead of the Army and the Navy about that.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. J. MINIFIE: (continuing) But, if you have a censor who is responsible, you can get a tip. The little man will kill it; but you can get the chief censor, and he usually lets it go.

THE PRESIDENT: Very good. Of course, I think we may look into it. Don't you think those two qualifications are pretty good?

MR. J. MINIFIE: Fundamental, sir -- fundamental. We must have them.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Talk with Steve about them, because as I have just said, we have only been at it forty-eight hours.

MR. J. MINIFIE: It sounds funny for a newspaperman to be advocating a censorship.

THE PRESIDENT: What we want is to get the news out as soon as we can, subject to the two qualifications, and do it in the most convenient way.

MR. J. MINIFIE: (interjecting) Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) In other words, our objectives are exactly alike. Talk to Steve about it. It is going to work all right.

(to Steve Early): I wish you would talk with him.

MR. EARLY: Yes.

THE PRESIDENT: And of course, I want you to get the London experience.

After all they have been at it over two years.

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Yes. All right.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And if we have a little bit more centralized source to go to when there is something that breaks between the regular announcement times ---

MR. J. MINIFIE: (interjecting) Yes, sir. Exactly.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- that would be a good thing.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #791

Executive Office of the President

December 12, 1941 -- 11.00 A.M.

THE PRESIDENT: Did you take anything off my desk?

MR. EARLY: Sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Did you take anything off my desk?

MR. EARLY: Not a thing. I laid several things on your desk. Not guilty -- of taking anything.

THE PRESIDENT: I will have to take another look. (the President found what he was looking for)

I have got about five different things this morning. You might as well work too, you know.

Q We are, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: Don't look at me that way, Earl. (Earl Godwin)

MR. GODWIN: We were hoping something had developed in this half ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) None of it is front page stuff, I suppose; but it's all right.

MR. GODWIN: Cheerful?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. GODWIN: Cheerful?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, they are factual. Neither one way nor the other.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have got a number of things, all of which shed a light on operations.

The first thing is that I received yesterday morning a very fine telegram from the Prime Minister of Great Britain and Lord Beaverbrook, offering to help the United States in any particular where we were

short of any materials, and specifically offered to turn over to us the product -- the output of three shell-making plants in Canada, in case we need that immediate output. The thing is being studied at the present time. I just use that as an illustration of the spirit.

Number two, the Treasury reports that on Monday and Tuesday and Wednesday -- this week -- we sold, through banks, defense bonds of five million, five hundred and ninety two thousand dollars, (\$5,592,000) as against last week's sale, on the first three days of the week of two million, four hundred and seventy four thousand dollars.

(\$2,474,000) In other words, a -- 126% up -- more than double.

Through the Post Offices in the same period, at five big offices, we sold one million, five hundred and ten thousand (\$1,510,000), in the first three days of this week; as compared with eight hundred and fifty two thousand (\$852,000) the first three days of last week, or an increase of 70%. And the Post Office stamp sales -- again just in five of the biggest Post Offices -- went up 25%.

Hmm -- at my request, I got -- this is a sort of detail, but it will fit in somewhere on the inside page -- the Great Lakes ore movement, from the top of the Great Lakes, has now closed for the season, on account of the Lakes getting frozen. The ore movement -- mostly by water, of course, during the navigation season of 1941 -- was 80,000,000 long tons, as against 65 -1/2 million long tons in '40; and also -- as against -- what might be called the first World War period, when the best record got up to 66 - 1/2 million tons. The total stock pile of ore is 2,000,000 tons on hand at the plants greater than it was on -- at the opening of the season in April. That is to say -- I wouldn't put it that way -- we start the winter season

with 2,000,000 more tons in the stock pile than this time last year. We have enough new ore carriers which will go into service on the Great Lakes -- new ones -- that we believe will enable us to get all the ore that is needed in 1942.

I signed last night -- and Steve will give you copies -- an Executive Order, relating to certain regulations in setting up eight defensive sea areas. You will get the list. Portland, Maine; Portsmouth; Boston; Narragansett Bay; San Diego; San Francisco; Columbia River, and Puget Sound. And the Navy says that there is not only -- no reason why this shouldn't be made public in detail. It has all the -- the directions of these -- it meets the purpose of these arrangements, but it would be a good thing to have it made public for the use of our own navigation -- coastwise navigation -- so that they will know where they can go, and where they ought not to go.

And finally, I am about to sign a Proclamation, which I think probably ought to be stressed a little bit, because it has nothing to do with war operations, but it has to do with the conduct of the war -- in regard to the Red Cross. The third Whereas clause -- Steve, you have got a copy of this?

MR. EARLY: It will be ready, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. (reading):

"WHEREAS in preparation for just such an emergency as we are now facing, the American National Red Cross has been spending funds at the rate of more than one million dollars a month, which is but a small fraction of the amount that the organization now requires in order to carry out effectively its functions as an essential auxiliary of our armed forces, particularly as a friendly liaison in welfare problems between the man in service and his family at home, and as a key agency in the civil-defense plans: --- etcetera.

"I hereby proclaim the beginning, as of this date, of a Red Cross War Fund Campaign for the raising of a minimum sum

of fifty million dollars; and appeal to the American people to make this campaign an overwhelming success."

I think it is very important that we carry this out as an essential part of the war.

Q There is no reason why the Gulf can't be a defensive area, is there, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't -- I couldn't tell you. It might be called one any old time, but it's not in this.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: Mr. President, the British, for obvious reasons, have been carrying on intensive production of anti-aircraft guns, whereas we haven't. I was just wondering ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Whereas we haven't?

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: I mean that naturally it is -- my understanding is that they have naturally gone in harder for it than we have to this point, ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Have they?

MR. KLUCKHOHN: (continuing) --- but we have been doing other things.

THE PRESIDENT: Have they?

MR. KLUCKHOHN: I don't know.

THE PRESIDENT: Neither do I. (laughter)

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: I was going to ask whether any consideration down here was being given to get any of that production, in line with the Prime Minister's offer?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I don't think that that particularly figures -- I haven't studied the particular figures, but I think your premise is all wrong. That's all I can say.

Q Mr. President, would you care to make any comment, sir, on the attitude expressed by various Latin American governments in support of our position?

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

Q The attitude expressed by various Latin American governments in support of our position?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say just two words. First: Excellent. And second: Wholly Satisfactory. That's three words. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have you decided who will go to the American conference in Rio?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet. We haven't discussed it.

Oh, I have one other thing that I might as well tell you about, because the thing only came up this morning. That is this:

In the World War, everybody that was in it -- both sides, I think -- and in the present war all those who were in it since the first of September, the papers have not carried columns, and pages, of the names of casualties. That was done by common consent. And the thought of both the Army and the Navy is that we should conform to that common consent agreement.

Just as soon as it is possible, the next of kin of both -- both the death list and the casualty list -- the wounded list, always just as soon as we can possibly get it, we send it to the next of kin, so that there is nothing hidden from the people who are interested in the man's name, and we get it to them just as soon as we can. The newspapers will give out the totals of killed and wounded.

And I want to express the hope that the newspapers of the country, and the radio -- of course they do not do it on the radio, probably, any way -- will not print the lists, for very obvious reasons. It gives information to the enemy.

Q (interposing) Does that mean, Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) You will get the totals, and the families will get the names.

Q Does that mean, Mr. President, that Press Associations should not distribute them?

THE PRESIDENT: Should not what?

Q Should not distribute them?

THE PRESIDENT: I think it would be far better, because if the Press Associations do distribute the individual names, it is performing a very useful service, perhaps, on checking up just where the people were, by a little obvious deduction -- putting two and two together -- finding out where this man was serving, and the other man was serving. I don't see why the rule should not apply to Press Associations as well as individual newspapers.

Q Will this be made public here?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Will this be made public here, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not the list as a whole. The totals will. And all the families will be notified. And of course locally -- in local papers, nobody can prevent the fact from coming out -- as soon as the mother, or the wife, or something like that, knows that there has been a casualty -- of printing the name of the person -- "so and so was wounded," or, "so and so was killed." What I am talking about are the long columns -- death columns, that's all.

Q We have had -- already had some ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) You have had some already. They were mostly locally used. In the Washington papers were the names of people that have been killed or wounded. That's all right.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, there is no objection to their local publication then?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, my own thought is this, that I think it would be much better not to put it as a list. It takes a little more space -- put it in -- in the form: Mrs. so and so -- or, Miss so and so was informed of the death of her husband, or her brother, or son, or whatever it may be. I don't like this idea of long casualty lists. It is not a good thing.

Q Mr. President, is the Garrison at Wake Island still holding out?

THE PRESIDENT: So far as we know, Wake Island is holding out -- has done a perfectly magnificent job. We are all very proud of that very small group of Marines who are holding the Island. We have no further information today. They are holding out. We knew that very early this morning.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Mr. President, some of us are still nervous about whether we are going to be scooped or not, on the real facts in Pearl Harbor now.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary of the Navy got there last night, and that is all that I can ---

MR. J. WRIGHT: (interposing) We hear people say that on Saturday they are going to tell all, and publish all, and so on, and that -- that those of us who heard these stories ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Well, I don't think that anybody had better publish anything in the way of stories until we get a report from the Secretary of the Navy.

MR. J. WRIGHT: That is what I would like to know. What is going to be done if they do go ahead with this threat?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I should say that we would remember the people who did it. I don't know. And the War Department doesn't know. The Navy Department doesn't know.

MR. J. WRIGHT: Just as a specific case -- yesterday, on the floor of the Senate, there were a lot of things said there that seemed to be transgressing entirely our own understanding of what ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I think you are absolutely correct.

MR. J. WRIGHT: (continuing) But you cannot ignore what a Senator says on the floor of the Senate?

THE PRESIDENT: No, but you can characterize it in one of those well known news paragraphs -- you know -- which are not entirely factual. (laughter) Is that a polite way of putting it, Jim? In other words -- now this has got to be off the record, because I can't criticize individuals. The Senator who made those as statements didn't know one damn thing about it. He repeated somebody's gossip. He made it as a statement of fact, which he had no right to do whatsoever. And that has to be off the record. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: Were you speaking of yesterday afternoon's debate?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

MR. J. WRIGHT: I think that should be on the record, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: What? (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: I think that should be on the record.

Q In quotes, Mr. President.

Q Why not, Mr. President?

Q We need that kind of useful ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) All right. Will you ---

Q (interposing) He doesn't know a damn thing about it ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Leave that all in, but leave out the word "damn".

Q Can that be read back to us?

MR. ROMAGNA: (reading): The Senator who made that statement didn't know a thing -- (laughter) -- about it. He repeated somebody's gossip. He made it as a statement ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) Of fact.

MR. ROMAGNA: (continuing) --- of fact, which he had no right to do whatsoever.

Q Are we permitted to use direct quotes on that, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Early): What do you think, Steve?

MR. EARLY: I think "third person" is all right.

THE PRESIDENT: I think "third person" is better.

Q Mr. President, did you see the British Prime Minister's statement yesterday, sir, in Commons about that? He said the loss to the American Fleet could not be over-rated?

THE PRESIDENT: Perfectly true. I had said it first thing -- beforehand -- in very slightly different terms.

Q Mr. President, are you contemplating any change of the hours in the Wage-Hour Act -- that forty-hour limitation?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not that I know of. In other words, I think that stays forty hours, and everything over that is time-and-a-half pay.

Q Mr. President, are you contemplating longer hours for Federal employees?

THE PRESIDENT: That I couldn't tell you. I don't know.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It has been in -- what? -- the Navy.

MR. EARLY: Discretionary.

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose it could be done at the discretion of the Department.

Q Can you tell us anything about the Labor-Management Conference you are going to call next week?

THE PRESIDENT: There will be a Labor-Management Conference next week, I think on Wednesday. I wanted to have it on Monday, but there were certain prior engagements of the people involved, and we have got, perhaps, to put it off to Wednesday.

Q Have you selected a Moderator, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not yet. Perhaps I have, but he doesn't know, so I had better say "not yet".

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, sir.

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: I shouldn't ask about what I know nothing about.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. F. KLUCKHOHN: I shouldn't ask about what I know nothing about.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

CONFIDENTIAL
Press Conference #792
Executive Office of the President
December 16, 1941 -- 4.10 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT: Is it all right to say that Byron Price wrote this himself?

MR. L. MELLETT: You can still say that that's not domestic censorship.

THE PRESIDENT: That what?

MR. L. MELLETT: You can still say that that's not domestic censorship.

MR. EARLY: Oh sure.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. L. MELLETT: Not domestic.

MR. EARLY: Complete domestic.

THE PRESIDENT: (to Mr. Godwin) What time are you on the air now?

MR. GODWIN: In the morning, in Washington, at 7.45. That's too early, but
Walter Winchell hears me. And in the evening it's 7.15 to ---

THE PRESIDENT: I know that, but that time is no good at all. Nobody's up
at that time, besides yourself, and a few birds -- a policeman and the
milkman.

MR. GODWIN: If you want to know how many hear you make a mistake, then you
will find out.

THE PRESIDENT: Was his pronunciation clear on that last word?

MR. GODWIN: What are you talking about?

THE PRESIDENT: He knows just what I mean.

MR. EARLY: Sons of yellow --- . (dastards?)

MR. GODWIN: I gave you as an authority.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, I had to pause myself before I said it. (laughter)

It's a one-second interval.

MR. GODWIN: Wonderful opportunity.

Q Did you make a slip on that?

MR. GODWIN: No, I never did. I get letters from people, they say we have to conduct this war with kindness.

THE PRESIDENT: That's right. It was one of those long-range broadcasts out of Japan, from a woman speaking in English. She said that God was on the side of the Emperor.

MR. GODWIN: I bet He's sorry. (laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am going to read you something. Just before you write your headlines, you ought to know -- this -- this is off the record -- the author was Byron Price. So be charitable.

This relates to a thing which will go into effect as soon as the War Powers bill, which is now pending, is passed. The War Powers bill is, of course, essentially -- I think it is almost identical with the war powers in the World War, and principally ties in the various legislation of the past, and at the present ---

Q (interposing) A little louder, please, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q A little louder, please, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) This is going to happen just as soon as the bill goes through.

(reading): "All Americans abhor censorship, just as they abhor war. But the experience of this and of all other nations has demonstrated that some degree of censorship is essential in war time, and we are at war.

"The important thing now is that such forms of censorship as are necessary shall be administered effectively and in harmony with the best interests of our free institutions.

"It is necessary to the national security that military information which might be of aid to the enemy be scrupulously withheld at the source.

"It is necessary that a watch be set upon our borders, so that no such information may reach the enemy, inadvertently or otherwise, through the medium of the mails, radio or cable transmission, or by any other means.

"It is necessary that prohibitions against the domestic publication of some types of information, contained in long-existing statutes, be rigidly enforced.

"Finally, the Government has called upon a patriotic press and radio to abstain voluntarily from the dissemination of detailed information of certain kinds, such as reports of the movements of vessels and troops. The response has indicated a universal desire to cooperate.

"In order that all of these parallel and requisite undertakings may be coordinated and carried forward in accordance with a single uniform policy, I have appointed Byron Price, Executive News Editor of the Associated Press, to be Director of Censorship, responsible directly to the President. He has been granted a leave of absence by the Associated Press and will take over the post assigned him within the coming week, or sooner."

Q You left his title out.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q You left his title out.

THE PRESIDENT: Director of Censorship.

Q That's right.

THE PRESIDENT: I think Lowell (Lowell Mellett, Office of Government Reports) wanted that distinctly understood. (laughter) Steve has got it for you outside.

Q Mr. President, have any tentative mechanics been set up, or will that be done after Byron is in?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It won't be done until Byron gets here. I don't think I have anything else.

Q Mr. President, can you discuss censorship of mail, etcetera, now?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. You will have to ask Byron that. I suppose, off-hand, it would be a censorship of outgoing and incoming mail. Not

domestic.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can tell us about the coordination of military direction, such as the joint staff, between the warring powers?

THE PRESIDENT: Coming along very well.

Q Could you tell us, in that connection, Mr. President, if there have been discussions among the powers that are fighting the Axis -- military discussions?

THE PRESIDENT: I think, at the present time -- off the record -- that they have been going on for quite a long time, and they are still going on. I don't think you had better use that, because I don't want to get into when they started. As a matter of fact, nobody can assign a basic date. Of course, people have been talking about the possibility of a need of it for some time. Just like, for instance, the Navy General Board, or the Army General Staff; they all have plans for things like that, even before they happen.

Q Mr. President, I am afraid I was a little dumb, while you were reading that. Is this to be partly a mandatory and partly a voluntary censorship, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: I guess it will be a combination of the two.

Q You haven't decided yet, sir, whether -- how it is going to work out? Will it be -- will the military information be censored at the source -- in part? Do we have to submit copy?

THE PRESIDENT: My God! Think of the problem of that!

Q What's that?

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't -- I wouldn't have any bad dreams until that happened.

Q Mr. President, where will Mr. Price function? Where will he be?

THE PRESIDENT: Washington.

Q Where?

THE PRESIDENT: I suppose.

MR. EARLY: Try to find a place in Washington.

THE PRESIDENT: If we can find a place for him.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. President, you remember in the last -- in the previous war, down in the Navy, they enlisted a lot of women to serve as Yeoman -- Yeomanettes? I think the Army and the Marine Corps did also?

THE PRESIDENT: I took a review of them down here.

MR. GODWIN: I know it -- you did. Have you any such idea that that will occur?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

MR. GODWIN: Haven't got around to it?

THE PRESIDENT: Would you like the job drilling them? (laughter)

Q He did in the last war, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I know he did.

Q Mr. President, there have been some reports around town that there will be some sort of re-organization for strengthening of the Civilian Defense setup. Perhaps some appointment of additional officials to tighten up ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) I don't know.

Q What -- would it be correct to say that it would be premature to talk about that, or is there anything in prospect?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course the whole organization is in a state of development. I suppose that's the easiest way of putting it.

Q Mr. President, one of the most interesting reports -- parts, I thought,

of Mr. Knox's report on Hawaii yesterday was that in regard to the Japanese fifth column activity. There was so much else to be reported. The Secretary discussed it to some extent, but not very completely.

I am wondering whether you can tell us any more about that?

THE PRESIDENT: Of course, it is being analyzed, in order to try to prevent a recurrence of it in other parts of the world.

Q Do you -- do you have a pretty good line on what the Japs were doing -- how they got the information?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are -- they are investigating it, and studying it and analyzing it. That's all you can say. They know more now than before it happened.

Q Mr. President, Secretary Knox indicated yesterday that a Board of Inquiry would be appointed by you today.

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Can you make an announcement later in the day?

THE PRESIDENT: I hope so.

Q Would that mean your report, sir in this conference -- after this Press Conference -- with the War and Navy people?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so.

Q Mr. President, are you offering any job to Wendell Willkie?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not at the present time. I don't think I would say that I am not offering any job, because he told you yesterday that he hadn't been offered a job yesterday. So I don't think that the negative -- what they call a "negative pregnant" is now called for, if you remember your old Hill's Rhetoric. (laughter)

MR. T. REYNOLDS: Thank you, Mr. President.

MR. GODWIN: Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know whether you had ever studied that. You had better. It's good.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #793

Executive Office of the President

December 19, 1941 -- 10.55 A.M.

Q Good morning, sir.

Q Good morning, sir.

(the President waved his hand in acknowledgment)

(pause here as newspapermen file in)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I have two things here that relate to the general improvement of -- simplification of defense work. The first is -- a telegram went out early this morning to the forty-eight Governors, and Steve has had this mimeographed, so you can take your time, you will get it when you go out.

(reading): "Now that this country is actually at war it is more than ever necessary that we utilize to the fullest possible extent all of the manpower and womanpower of this country to increase our production of war materials. This can only be accomplished by centralizing recruiting work into one agency. At present, as you know, the United States Employment Service consists of fifty separate State and territorial employment services whose operations are loosely coordinated by the Federal Government. In order that there may be complete responsiveness to the demands of national defense and speedy, uniform, effective action to meet rapidly changing needs, it is essential that all of these separate employment services become a uniformly and of necessity nationally operated employment service. I have, therefore, given instructions to the proper Federal officials that the necessary steps be taken to accomplish this purpose at once. I ask that you likewise instruct the proper officials of your State to transfer to the United States Employment Service all of the present personnel, records, and facilities required for this operation. Inasmuch as the Federal Government is already paying practically one hundred percent of the cost of operation and the State personnel has been recruited on a merit basis, there will be no difficulty in transferring State employees into the Federal service. These employment offices will continue to serve the unemployment compensation agency so that there will be no need to set up duplicate offices. I shall appreciate your advising me at once of your full cooperation so

that the conversion of the present employment service into a truly national service may be accomplished without delay."

That has gone to the forty-eight Governors, and to the two Territorial Governors. I think it explains itself. It won't cost any more, but it will make very much for efficiency at the present time, where they have employment offices. That -- there are practically two -- two doors. One is the State door, and the other is the Federal door. And the cost of both offices is borne by the Federal Government, as it is today, through the matching basis, and now will be all concentrated into one.

Now, right along that line, the Governors Conference and the Council of State Governments is cooperating with us one hundred percent. I had thought -- oh -- last week, of having a meeting with all the Governors, down here in Washington, but there was such a complete understanding and cooperation that it seems an unnecessary thing to have them all come down here, and to be a -- a waste motion. We are in very close touch with each other -- the Governors of all the States -- and the thing is going along one hundred percent.

This telegram -- statement rather -- which has not been mimeographed -- you will have to take notes on this -- is from the Governors Conference, or rather a Committee of the Governors Conference and the Council of State Governments. It is approved by the Board of Managers of the State Council of Governments, and by the Executive Committee of the Governors Conference, on which I used to serve myself.

It is a statement. Each Governor will -- as authority for using it in their own States -- emphasize the need for consistent fiscal action by Federal and State and local governments. It indicates how the State and local governments can help combat inflation, expedite defense pro-

duction, and prepare for post-war readjustments.

Then there are six -- six clauses, which we boiled down. First, that in adjusting their own services they give priorities to activities that will best promote defense. In other words, giving that a priority on all their work. Second, they postpone non-defense public works, and adjust other services so as to release the utmost manpower and materials. Third, that they maintain public facilities in good condition, simplify the specifications, perfect purchasing procedures, develop cooperative buying arrangements, and otherwise improve administrative organization and methods. Fourth, that they begin now to prepare programs for useful post-war public works. In other words, the thing that -- as you know, we have been setting up here a thing I call my "kitty" -- a whole lot of public works which will be used to cushion the post-war period. Five, that they retire the debt, or accumulate cash reserves, so as to be able to finance post-war readjustment. And sixth, that they safeguard their essential services and their own vital role as basic service institutions in a free democracy.

That comes from them, and is one hundred percent, when they call attention to the fact that that includes not only State governments but also local and municipal governments as well.

I think that's all.

Q Mr. President, going from the point of the "negative pregnant," is Mr.

Willkie going to come into the national defense picture for some official work?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't think I have any news on that today.

Q That then, sir, is not denying that he might come in?

THE PRESIDENT: What? No. But I still would not use it that way. As I

said before -- in other words -- there is no news on it today; and at your risk you interpret that, and probably you'll be wrong. (laughter)

MR. GODWIN: It depends how -- do you include Governor Russell Young in these -- does the District of Columbia come in on that labor-employment statement that you made?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. Have they got their own Employment Service in the District, or is that a Federal one?

MR. EARLY: (interjecting) Under W.P.A.

THE PRESIDENT: It's under W.P.A.

MR. GODWIN: Then I wouldn't have to ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) No.

Q Mr. President, could you add anything to the prospects of getting power on the Boulder -- Douglas Dam?

THE PRESIDENT: No. That is still being discussed, and "Hope springs eternal."

Q It's an important "hope" isn't it?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Very.

Q Have you heard anything today on your labor-industry conference, as to any progress?

THE PRESIDENT: Nothing today. I got a report of good progress last night -- I don't know, what? -- about seven o'clock. I haven't heard since then.

Q Mr. President, any expectation of a release to the public of a report by this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: By what?

Q A report by this evening?

THE PRESIDENT: I couldn't tell you. I haven't ---.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us what you took up with the Australian Minister, day before yesterday?

THE PRESIDENT: The usual thing -- defense. Common defense in a common war.

Q Mr. President, is there anything you can say about an Inter-Allied Command?

THE PRESIDENT: No. Not today.

Q Is there to be a conference of that here, Mr. President? The story has been printed.

THE PRESIDENT: No. There have been conferences on that for a long, long time. Every day.

Q Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT: (adding) For weeks.

Q Mr. President, there is great concern here, among about one hundred or two hundred patent attorneys, for fear they are going to have to move their offices and everything up to New York. Can you tell us whether or not there is anything in that, sir, and if so what?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, as you know, we have to get more space in the District to work in, and there has been prepared a long list of "happy thoughts" -- people who could be moved -- bureaus, and individual departments, and things like that. And, of course, on the first going over of that list, we, by common consent, eliminated a portion of that list. It is still a long list.

And if I were to talk about any individual bureau, or department, or agency, or anything like that, what would you have? You would have a concentrated drive -- I suppose a concentrated drive, not only on me but on the Congress, "For the love of Heaven, don't move us."

Now it is going to be a hardship -- we have to ask -- somebody's got to be moved. And it is going to be a hardship on a lot of the employees in the bureau, department, agency, commission, who have got

homes here in the District. We all know that. That is one of the results of war. I have no idea who is going to be moved. It still is a list that is too long.

And I am not going to tell you who is on the list at the present time. I want to avoid what is essentially another form of lobbying -- to stay here. Perfectly -- perfectly natural thing. I don't know. I suppose probably in the course of the next week we will get that list down still further, and we will have to take some action on it pretty soon.

Q Is it contemplated, Mr. President, that most of these agencies will move to New York City?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh no. All over the place.

Q All over the place?

THE PRESIDENT: Uh huh.

Well, just for example on the -- on this list which is altogether too big, there is a suggestion that some of them move to half a dozen Middle Western cities, some to Southern cities, some to New York and all points North. In other words, we have got the whole United States to send them to, if we have to.

Q Mr. President ---

Q (interposing) About how many will they have to move?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q About how many will you have to move?

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it will be a shorter list than the long list. (laughter)

Q Very clear, Thank you. (more laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: I thought that would be helpful.

MR. GODWIN: It might be -- it would certainly be interesting to figure on

the number of employees that you might add to the Federal list now.

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) Yes.

MR. GODWIN: (continuing) Have you any information on that -- that could be based on?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything about the possibility of relieving Midway and Wake Islands?

THE PRESIDENT: No.

Q Mr. President, did any facts or arguments develop in Congress in the last two days to modify your purpose, as Commander-in-Chief, that the draft age should be 19?

THE PRESIDENT: I think they are working on it now. It is now in the hands of the Congress.

Q My question, sir, was whether anything had developed in the debate to modify your stand?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know. I haven't read the debate. (laughter)

Q Mr. President, have there been any conversations with France in regard to the French islands on our northeast coast, similar to Martinique?

THE PRESIDENT: Martinique? You mean Saint Pierre and Miquelon.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Saint Pierre and Miquelon--Scotch whiskey.

THE PRESIDENT: You will have to ask the State Department.

Q Mr. President, what -- when will Byron Price be down?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q When will Byron Price be down?

MR. EARLY: (interposing) He is expected to arrive today.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

MR. EARLY: Expected today.

THE PRESIDENT: Expected today.

MR. GODWIN: (aside) How about this?

Thank you, Mr. President.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #794

Executive Office of the President

December 23, 1941 -- 4.00 p.m.

(The guest at this Press Conference was the Prime Minister of Great Britain, Winston Churchill)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) The boys are in front of the chairs.

(the President then introduced Mr. Eugene Casey, Mr. Lowell Mellett, and Mr. Lauchlin Currie to the Prime Minister)

MR. EARLY: All right.

THE PRESIDENT: All right. (newspapermen begin to file in)

You got in awfully fast.

Q We have been waiting a long time too.

(pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) We ought to have an amphitheatre for this, because it is only in the front two or three rows that you can see.

MR. EARLY: (to the President) They are checking credentials very carefully, and there are so many it is going to be slow.

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister) It is going to be slow. They are checking the credentials. We are afraid there might be a wolf in sheep's clothing.

(to Mr. Early) Steve, has that been given out? (regarding Executive Order establishing Office of Defense Transportation)

MR. EARLY: No, sir. It is available after the conference.

(pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

MR. EARLY: (aside) I would like to get the gate receipts today.

Q When will they all be in?

THE PRESIDENT: (to the Prime Minister, after conversing with him in an undertone) He (Earl Godwin) not only writes stories but he also broadcasts twice a day.

MR. GODWIN: Three times.

(another pause here as newspapermen continue to file in)

Q How do you rate that, May? (who was sitting down beside Mr. Godwin)

MISS MAY CRAIG: Steve invited me.

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I am sorry to have taken so long for all of you to get in, but apparently -- I was telling the Prime Minister -- the object was to prevent a wolf from coming in here in sheep's clothing. (laughter) But I was thereby mixing my metaphors, because I had suggested to him this morning that if he came to this conference he would have to be prepared to meet the American press, who, compared with the British press -- as was my experience in the old days -- are "wolves" compared with the British press "lambs."

However, he is -- he is quite willing to take on a conference, because we have one characteristic in common. We like new experiences in life.

I only have one or two things. And the first is -- I will get myself out of the way first -- the first is that I have established the Office of Defense Transportation, in the Executive Office of the President. They are to coordinate all of the transportation policies and the activities of the several Federal agencies and private transportation groups, compile and analyze estimates of the requirements of the future, and coordinate and direct domestic traffic movements. They will have in the Office a Division of Railway Transportation; a Divi-

sion of Motor Transport; a Division of Inland Waterway Transport; a Division of Coastwise and Inter-Coastal Transport, and such other operating and staff Divisions as the Director may determine.

And I have appointed Mr. Joe Eastman (Joseph B. Eastman, Commissioner of Interstate Commerce Commission) to the position of Director, and asked the Interstate Commerce Commission to give him leave of absence for that purpose.

I think that is all that I have.

If you want to know something about plans for the immediate future, I think last night's statement covered the great purpose and the objective of the Conference Mr. Churchill and I are having with the staffs.

And we want to make it clear that this is a preliminary British-American Conference, but that thereby no other nations are excluded from the general objective of defeating Hitlerism in the world. Just for example, I think the Prime Minister this morning has been consulting with the Dominions. That is especially important, of course, in view of the fact that Australia and New Zealand are very definitely in the danger zone; and we are working out a complete unity of action in regard to the Southwest Pacific. In addition to that, there are a good many nations besides our own that are at war.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (interjecting) Canada.

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Canada, the Prime Minister suggests, is also ---

THE PRIME MINISTER: (interposing) In the line.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- in the line -- both sides of Canada. I think it is all right to say that Mr. Mackenzie King will be here later on.

(the Prime Minister nodded his head)

In regard to the other nations, such as the Russians, the Chinese, the Dutch, and a number of other nations which are -- shall I say -- overrun by Germany, but which still maintain governments which are operating in the common cause, they also will be on the inside in what we are doing.

In addition to that, there are various other nations, such as a number of American Republics who are actually in the war, and another number of American Republics which although not acting under a declaration of war are giving us very definite and much-needed assistance. It might be called on their part, "active non-belligerency."

At five o'clock we are having a staff meeting. We have already had a meeting with the State Department officials, and during the next few days those will materialize. We can't give you any more news about them at this time, except to say that the whole matter is progressing very satisfactorily.

Steve and I first thought that I would introduce the Prime Minister, and let him say a few words to you good people, by banning questions. However, the Prime Minister did not go along with that idea, and I don't blame him. He said that he is perfectly willing to answer any reasonable questions for a reasonably short time, if you want to ask him.

VOICE: (interposing) Will you ask him ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) And so I am going to introduce him, and you to him ---

VOICE: (interposing) Can't see him.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- and tell you that we are very, very happy to have him here.

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the President) Before you do, sir ---

THE PRESIDENT: Wait a minute. Steve's got something.

MR. EARLY: (aside to the President) Before you do, there are many here -- there are many visitors who are -- who are not familiar with the rules of the conference. I should suggest to them the use of "third person."

THE PRESIDENT: Oh yes.

There are many here who are not familiar with the rules of the conference, Steve says, and I would suggest that they remember that there are no "quotes" -- nothing is to be quoted. Everything is to be in the "third person," and can be used, with the exception of two matters. The Prime Minister doesn't know this himself. A thing that is "background" may not be attributed to the President, or the Prime Minister, but it is for your information in writing stories. A thing that is announced as off-the-record is for your information, but not to be disclosed under any circumstances.

And so I will introduce the Prime Minister.

(to the Prime Minister): I wish you would just stand up for one minute and let them see you. They can't see you.

(applause greeted the Prime Minister when he stood up, but when he climbed onto his chair so that they could see him better, loud and spontaneous cheers and applause rang through the room)

THE PRESIDENT: (to the press) Go ahead and shoot.

Q What about Singapore, Mr. Prime Minister? The people of Australia are terribly anxious about it. Would you say to be of good cheer?

THE PRIME MINISTER: We are going to do our utmost to defend Singapore and its approaches until the situation becomes so favorable to us that the general offensive in the Pacific can be resumed.

Q Thank you, sir.

Q Mr. Minister ---

Q (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, isn't Singapore the key to the whole situation out there?

THE PRIME MINISTER: The key to the whole situation is the resolute manner in which the British and American Democracies are going to throw themselves into the conflict. As a geographical and strategic point it obviously is of very high importance.

Q Mr. Minister, could you tell us what you think of conditions within Germany -- the morale?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, I have always been feeling that one of these days we might get a windfall coming from that quarter, but I don't think we ought to count on it. Just go on as if they were keeping on as bad as they are, or as good as they are. And then one of these days, as we did in the last war, we may wake up and find we ran short of Huns.
(laughter)

Q Do you think the war is turning in our favor in the last month or so?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q Do you think the war is turning in our favor in the last month or so?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I can't describe the feelings of relief with which I find Russia victorious, the United States and Great Britain standing side by side. It is incredible to anyone who has lived through the lonely months of 1940. It is incredible. Thank God.

MR. GODWIN: Mr. Prime Minister, there have been suggestions from various sources that possibly the German retreat -- or the Russian success -- has some element of trickery in it, that the Germans are not particularly routed. In other words, a bit of camouflage. Can you throw any light on that, or do you care to?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, of course, it is only my opinion, but I think that they have received a very heavy rebuff. Hitler prophesied that he would take Moscow in a short time.

MR. GODWIN: (interjecting) Yes.

THE PRIME MINISTER: (continuing) Now his armies are joggling backwards over this immense front, wondering where he can find a place to winter. It won't be a comfortable place. They have had immense losses. And the Russians have shown a power of resiliency, a gift of modern warfare under their leader, Stalin, which has rendered immense service to the world cause.

Q Mr. Minister, can you tell us when you think we may lick these boys?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q About what year ---

MR. EARLY: (interposing) (to the Prime Minister) When they might lick these boys?

Q How long will it take them to lick them?

THE PRESIDENT: (aside) Oh.

THE PRIME MINISTER: If we manage it well, it will only take half as long as if we manage it badly. (loud laughter)

Q How long, sir, would it take if we managed it badly?

THE PRIME MINISTER: That has not been revealed to me at this moment. We don't need to manage it badly.

Q How long if we manage it well, sir?

THE PRIME MINISTER: What?

Q How long if we manage it well?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Yes.

Q How long if we manage it well?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, it would be imprudent to indulge in a facile optimism at the moment.

Q Do you favor a personal conference of yourself, Mr. Roosevelt, Stalin, and Chiang Kai-shek?

THE PRIME MINISTER: In principle, Yes. (loud laughter)

Q Do you think it is important, Mr. Prime Minister, that our American war materials continue to go, to some extent at least, through the Middle East and to Russia during this particular period?

THE PRIME MINISTER: My feeling is that the military power and munitions power of the United States is going to develop on such a great scale that the problem will not so much be the -- whether to choose between this and that, but how to get what is available to all the theatres in which we have to wage this World War.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, in one of your speeches you mentioned three or four of the great climacterics. Would you now add our entry into the war as one of those, sir?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I think I may almost say, "I sure do." (loud laughter)

Q Mr. Prime Minister, during your talks here, will you take up economic, and diplomatic, and post-war problems?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I hope not too much on them. Well, really, we have to concentrate on the grim emergencies, and we -- when we have solved them, we shall be in a position to deal with the future of the world in a manner to give the best results, and the most lasting results, for the common peoples of all the lands. But one has only a certain amount of life and strength, and only so many hours in the day, and other emergencies press upon us too much to be drawn into those very, very complicated, tangled and not in all cases attractive jungles.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, can you say anything now about the prospect of an anti-Axis command on those discussions?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I think it would be -- it would be very difficult to arrange. What you require is the broad blocking in of the main plans by the principal personages in charge of the action of the different States, and then the release of that to the highest military expert authorities for execution. But this is a war which is absolutely -- literally world-wide, proceeding at the same time from one end of the globe to the other, and in the air, on the land, and on the sea. I do not think there has ever been a man born -- even if he were Napoleon, he wouldn't know anything about the air -- who could assume the functions of world commander-in-chief for the -- I would say associated powers.
(laughter)

Q Mr. Prime Minister, are you giving consideration to creation of an Allied supplies command, whereby materials of the anti-Axis powers would be allocated under a central agency?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Well, there is the very closest liaison between our people over here and the United States officers. Lord Beaverbrook is here with an executive staff, and we have, I believe, quite a large staff here, and they are in the closest accord. Then at the summit of the problem is a fairly simple one of allocation in accordance with the emergency. And of course, the rule we have got to follow is to -- to see how much we can help each other. It should be a rivalry in mutual helpfulness, and that is the only one.

Q (interposing) Mr. Minister, do you anticipate a German offensive on a new front in the near future?

THE PRIME MINISTER: There is a lot of talk about their coming along --

coming along and making an attack in the Mediterranean. There is a lot of talk about their getting ready for an invasion of England next year. We have heard a lot of this, and I expect something will come of it, but where, I can't tell. I will be very glad to be informed. Gentlemen, if you have got any information, it will be thankfully received. (laughter)

Q Mr. Minister, have you any information as to whether the Germans have lost more materiel in Russia than they can replace by spring?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I should think that they have got ample materiel, because they not only have their own vast factories -- which were running at full war speed when the war broke out -- they have a great accumulation, and they have what they captured from so many other countries. I shouldn't think that was where they would run short. But of course, the quality of the materiel, as we move on each year into new and better times, they might not have the power to keep in the race with that.

Q Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Q (interposing) Mr. Prime Minister, what are the materials that Germany is most likely to run short of? What are the materials of which they are most short?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I did hear something about oil and other things, but it is rather technical for me.

Q Mr. Prime Minister, can you interpret any of the recent events in Germany as possible internal collapse -- symptomatic of an internal collapse?

THE PRIME MINISTER: Don't let us bank on that. We have got to bank on an external knockout. If the internal collapse comes, so much the

better.

Q Mr. Minister, have you any doubt of the ultimate victory?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I have no doubt whatever.

Q Thank you, Mr. Prime Minister.

Q (interposing) What about a Christmas Message for the American people?

THE PRIME MINISTER: I am told I have to do one on Christmas Eve, but I won't give it away beforehand.

CONFIDENTIAL

Press Conference #795,
Executive Office of the President,
December 30, 1941 -- 4.05 P.M.

Q Good afternoon, sir.

(pause here as newspapermen file in)

THE PRESIDENT: (indicating nearly empty workbasket) Isn't that basket rather good for these days?

Q A couple of quiet days.

THE PRESIDENT: Right up to date.

Q How are you coming along with the Budget, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: Ah! (holding his hand to his head) (laughter) I think I will probably finish it three minutes before it goes to the Hill. (more laughter)

MR. DONALDSON: All in.

THE PRESIDENT: I asked Steve if we had any news. He said Yes, you already had it -- a remarkable Message I sent up to the Hill today on parity for peanuts. Outside of that I don't think I have anything at all, except I have been working on the Budget, and it is rather more of a headache this year than previous years. A good many problems, as you will understand when you see it, not merely the program super-imposed on the present program, but also as to whether we will put into the Budget -- put it into the Budget on an expenditure basis, or put it on -- into the Budget on a -- on a complete cost basis. Of course those figures are very wide apart. And I suppose I will be working on it most of the time from now on until next week.

Q Can you say anything yet, sir, about the prospect of curtailment on non-defense expenditures? Have you set any goal?

THE PRESIDENT: No. We have quite a long list of non-defense expenditures which are being reduced. We haven't arrived at the total yet.

Q Can you give us any estimate, or guess, as to total, on the Budget?

THE PRESIDENT: No, because that depends on just -- as I was saying -- whether it's merely on an expenditure basis, or whether it will include the whole thing.

Q Mr. President, do you plan to deliver your Annual Message on the State of the Union in person?

THE PRESIDENT: I think so. And what the date will be, I don't know.

Q (interposing) Had you been ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) Does anybody happen to know whether they passed that Joint Resolution?

Q They did, sir.

Q They did.

Q For the 5th.

THE PRESIDENT: Congress will not re-assemble until the 5th. Well then, at a guess, I would say that I would go there on the 6th or the 7th. And the Budget, as usual, will be soon after I appear, and we will have our usual combing over of the Budget, as soon as I come back from the Message to Congress that same afternoon.

Q Mr. President, can you explain this expenditure of the whole cost basis? What is that? When you say "whole cost," you mean looking farther ahead where you have authorizations?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. What I mean is this: For instance, suppose some time -- mind you, I am talking about the '43 fiscal year Budget -- suppose we were to get authority, the end of this spring, to build "X" number of "Y." (laughter) I have got to the point now where I have to be

awfully careful. (more laughter) On the expenditure basis we would only put into the Budget what would be actually paid out of the Treasury. Now, that might not complete the program, which might last beyond the first of July, 1943.

Q You haven't made a decision on that yet?

THE PRESIDENT: No, no.

Q What has been the practice in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q What has been the practice in the past?

THE PRESIDENT: We worked it both ways.

Q Mr. President, have you anything to say about Government decentralization?

THE PRESIDENT: I could talk to you for a week on that. On what phase of it?

Q Well, anything at all. Any further plans -- any discussions on the present announced plan?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh. I see. You are not talking about Government decentralization ---

Q (interjecting) Moving Government offices.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- you are talking about moving offices out of Washington?

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, of course, that is purely -- it is a war measure.

There is great hardship for a lot of people in the conducting of any war in any walk of life. Even if you are in the Army, or the Navy, or in civilian life in a department, sometimes families have to be separated, because we are in a war period today. And we try to cause as little trouble and hardship as we possibly can, but there is a great deal of hardship. There is a great deal to be said on both sides of

any one bureau, or department, as to whether they should be moved, or the one next door should be moved. All we can do is to do the best we can.

Q Mr. President, is there going to be a reorganization of the speeding up of civilian defense?

THE PRESIDENT: I think probably you will find that things will come to a decision in a great many lines within the next week. As a matter of fact -- of course in general, the plans -- the planning stage is just about finished, and they are ready to go now to the operating stage, although some of that has already been done.

Q What about LaGuardia remaining?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know anything about individual personalities -- only the program as a whole.

Q Mr. President, I have been told -- perhaps mistakenly -- that relatively few factories are still working on Sunday. Have you any reports on that?

THE PRESIDENT: No, I haven't, except I am trying to speed up -- after all, it is only -- what? -- two weeks since the general plan went out to work seven days, and it means -- it means stepping up orders for supplies, so that people can work on supplies.

Q Mr. President, does the Army propose to accept the offer of Colonel Lindbergh for active service?

THE PRESIDENT: I haven't heard anything about it.

Q Mr. President, Mr. LaGuardia is coming down to town today. Do you plan to see him?

THE PRESIDENT: Oh, I suppose so. I nearly always do. Certainly on Fridays. Sometimes other days too.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us anything of your plans for establishing

the War Labor Board?

THE PRESIDENT: Not yet. They are working on it.

Q This week perhaps?

THE PRESIDENT: I don't know.

Q Mr. President, regarding the Budget, do you see any possibility of a drastic cut in relief expenditures on account of increased industrial operation?

THE PRESIDENT: It's a little difficult to say Yes or No to that, because, for instance, a thing that the -- I don't suppose the country realizes fully that while relief expenditures have been cut enormously, and will continue to be cut enormously, there may be certain things where we have to take care of human beings. As for instance, in changing an automobile factory over into a tank factory, or an airplane factory; we may have a good many hundred thousand people out of work during the retooling process. That is one thing that is forgotten. In other words, some of those people may have to be taken care of.

Q That includes business groups?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q The business situation too?

THE PRESIDENT: That, to a certain extent, although I think that is getting a lot better than it was.

Q Mr. President, can you comment on the story that was printed in Toronto, to the effect that we are going to pool with Canada and Great Britain our resources?

THE PRESIDENT: Going to pool what?

Q Pool our military resources with Canada and Great Britain, and not go ahead with the Lend-Lease program?

THE PRESIDENT: We have been doing that for a month. That is not new.

Q It was on the basis of not keeping books on it requiring repayment.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, those things will all have to be adjusted. It depends on whether the thing is used entirely.

Q That was on the ticker today, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: Well, it's -- it's about -- it's as old as the 7th of December.

Q Mr. President, can you tell us about your conference with the Supply chiefs last week, in the drafting of what has been called by the O.P.M. a "Victory Program"?

THE PRESIDENT: You'll spoil my Message to Congress if I tell you that.
(laughter)

Q I wouldn't want to do that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q I wouldn't want to do that, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: I can give you at least a hint, but don't -- don't put your own interpretation on it -- put it out as a hint -- let everybody decide for themselves what it means.

Up to the 7th of December we had a thing which was labeled by some people an "All-out Program" and other people called it a "Victory Program." I have discarded both those names. I'm calling it today the War Program.

Q The what, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: War Program. And it seems to me that is -- what will I say? -- a less dramatic thing to call it, than an "All-out Program" or a "Victory Program" because we are going to call it -- all of this new additional effort -- we are going to call it a War Program, from now on.

Now that Program on the 7th of December -- I have got to go back to my Algebra -- let us call it "X." And "X" looked awfully big to the people who brought it to me, with, I might almost say, fear and trembling that I would knock them over because it was so big. And I took a look at it, on the night of the 7th of December, and I said that was made up before the attack. And I sent it back to them to make it bigger. In other words, I added "Y" to it. And I got back a combined Program of "X" and "Y." And as a result of our talks during the past week among ourselves, and with the British, and with the Canadians, I have come -- not reluctantly but very gladly -- to the decision that the "X" plus "Y" Program does not represent the productive capacity of the United States, and in order to bring it to that total productive capacity, I am adding "Z" to it.

Q (interposing) Mr. President ---

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) I think you get the point?

Q Continuing to another equation, would "X-Y-Z" roughly equal "3X"? (laughter)

THE PRESIDENT: No. I will tell you why it is dangerous to approach it in that way. Some lines of production might be increased ten times, other lines of production might remain exactly the same, others might be increased half again. So I can't even take any relative figure. But what I am trying to do is to find out what the total over-all capacity of the country is to produce.

And somebody was asking me a little while ago about Lend-Lease.

The general theory is -- of course there will be an accounting kept on it -- but when a thing is ordered we can't tell what we will do with the article when it is completed. No human being can tell. It may go to Britain, it may go to Russia, it may go to the Dutch Indies, or

the Philippines, or Kamchatka.

Q Where? (laughter)

Q (interjecting) Russia.

THE PRESIDENT: Look it up on the map -- a very famous peninsula, which happens to be the most available practical land west of the Aleutian Islands.

Q Mr. President, you spoke of a War Program. Wouldn't it be a good idea to stop calling them Defense Bonds and call them War Bonds?

THE PRESIDENT: We talked about that with Henry Morgenthau, and he really wanted to, and we may very easily do it, except that the thing hasn't been going very long, and everybody has got "Defense" Bonds in their heads pretty well. I think in time there will be a change made, but when it will come, I don't know.

Q Mr. President, may I ask one other question about Lend-Lease? Is it still the present understanding anyway, that American arms used by our Allies would still theoretically be paid for under the terms of the Lend-Lease Bill, or is that issue up for reconsideration?

THE PRESIDENT: I would say that nobody has given it a thought during the past week, which was devoted not to thoughts of the future but thoughts of the present. I don't know.

Q The reason we ask the question is that that was the burden of the story printed in Canada, that now the issue of money was entirely eliminated in the distribution ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interjecting) No.

Q (continuing) --- of defense aid.

THE PRESIDENT: I wouldn't say that.

Q Mr. President, is Daylight Saving Time in prospect for the country? Are

you considering any plans?

THE PRESIDENT: That is being considered. The Attorney General is taking it up with the leaders on the Hill, and I don't know what they will say.

Q (interjecting) There was a bill introduced today.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) It will save, according to -- I think to the Federal Power Commission -- 500,000 kilowatts every day, which is an awful lot. A good thing.

Q Is that kilowatt, or kilowatt hours?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q Is that kilowatt, or kilowatt hours?

THE PRESIDENT: Kilowatt hours.

Q 500,000?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q 500,000?

Q (interposing) That is for the entire nation?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q The year around, Mr. President? Every day the year around would it be the same?

THE PRESIDENT: No. It is the time now -- the time between when we would go back to regular fall to the time we go on Daylight Saving in the spring.

Q Mr. President, Mr. Churchill said in his speech in Ottawa today that American and British Empire forces were going to the aid of the Dutch East Indies forces. Can you tell us anything about that?

THE PRESIDENT: It is perfectly true as stated by him. Of course, I couldn't tell you anything about the actual moves.

Q Did you hear the speech, sir?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes. Grand.

Q Mr. President, you say that the new program that you had arranged would take care of the total productive capacity of the nation. That would mean the one hundred percent curtailment of civilian lines, like autos, washing machines ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) There will be exceptions to what might be called more essential civilian services. Well, I can give you another inkling of the whole Budget, which I suppose is the easiest way of doing it.

(turning around at a remark of Mr. Early's) What? Spoiling all Steve's stories for next week.

In Great Britain something like -- I don't know -- I would be afraid -- don't take this figure, but well over half of the national income goes into defense activities -- the national payroll. And I am trying to work this country up from the present, which is geared at about 27%, based on national income, in other words, payroll, ---

Q (interposing) Mr. President, that 27% is next year's statement?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q That 27% is next year?

THE PRESIDENT: The end of this fiscal year.

Q Yes, sir.

THE PRESIDENT: (continuing) --- to about 50%. Now that is quite a big jump, and of course that is an over-all.

Q Yes, so that there will be cases where you would have one hundred percent curtailment? Then again there might be ---

THE PRESIDENT: (interposing) In other cases there might be no curtailment at all.

Q In any direction where there is now an overflow?

THE PRESIDENT: Yes.

Q Sir, what period of time will that cover?

THE PRESIDENT: During the fiscal year 1943.

Q What about taxes, Mr. President?

THE PRESIDENT: What?

Q How about taxes?

THE PRESIDENT: You shouldn't have such a vulgar mind as to think about taxes.

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President ---

Q Mr. President, what national income will that 50% be figured on? What is anticipated?

THE PRESIDENT: About a hundred. About a hundred billion.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

Q Thank you, Mr. President.

THE PRESIDENT: He's frightfully vulgar, isn't he? (laughter)